

LET US LEARN ISLAM

BELIEF • WORSHIP • SIRAH • ADAB



ACCORDING TO SHAFII SCHOOL

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LET US LEARN ISLAM

FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS / 9th CLASS



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FOREWORD

Praise to our Lord for giving us the honor and joy of living as a Muslim!

Many greetings to our Beloved Prophet –upon him blessings and peace-, his family and Companions, who lived and taught Islam in the most beautiful manner!

Our Beloved Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- was the greatest teacher who taught Islam to humankind. The Book he taught was the Holy Quran, a matchless miracle. The Blessed Prophet both read and explained the Quran. And he lived the faith, deeds of worship and moral taught by the Quran in the most beautiful fashion. After him, the Companions, the greats of Islam and our forefathers strived to both live this wonderful religion and to pass it onto future generations. The knowledge of Islam has hence been delivered to us, from heart to heart and from mouth to mouth. And now, it is our turn to learn.

Let Us Learn Islam - 3 has been prepared to cater for students of junior secondary level.

Consisting of four main chapters,

The first chapter teaches us our creed.

The second chapter instructs us the proper manner of offering worship.

The third chapter presents a segment from the exemplary life of our Beloved Prophet.

And the fourth chapter provides information on the good manners a Muslim should adopt.

We wish that we can learn our beautiful religion in the best manner; and become among the Muslims at whom the Blessed Prophet will smile in the Hereafter.

May your hearts be filled with faith, your lives with Islam and minds with sincerity! May the angels be your companions, and the righteous your friends! May Allah, glory unto Him, be your companion and helper!

May the path of your lives lead you to Paradise!

So in the name of Allah...

رَبِّ يَسِّرْ وَلَا تُعَسِّرْ رَبِّ تَمِّمْ بِالْخَيْرِ

‘Make it easy, o Lord, and not difficult; and conclude it all with goodness.’

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OUR GUIDE IN LIFE:



FAITH IN THE BOOKS OF ALLAH



- ❁ *People Need Revelation*
- ❁ *Divine Books*
- ❁ *The things that We Gain from
Believing in Divine Books*

- ❁ *Our Book: The Noble Qur'an*
- ❁ *Our Prophet and the Holy Qur'an*



PUT ON YOUR WINGS OF IMAGINATION

Bakr approached his father who was reciting the Qur'an. Pointing at the Noble Qur'an, he asked to his father:

"Daddy! I know the Qur'an is the word of Allah, but I want to know more about it. Would you tell me about the Qur'an?"

His father was very happy to hear Bakr's request. So he began to describe it:

"The Noble Qur'an, my son, is the sacred book of the Muslims. Allah sent people books in every epoch. In this way, He informed them concerning what He wants and expects from them. Long periods of time had passed and these books were lost. Then people began to live contrary to the orders of Allah. Our Almighty Creator always wants the goodness of His servants. This is why He sent a new book through a new messenger. This tradition routinely continued. And the Noble Qur'an is the last book Allah has sent. He also stated in the Qur'an that He will not send any more books.

— Daddy, so the Qur'an is everybody's book, isn't it?

— Well done my son! The Noble Qur'an is the book that all human beings from the time of our Prophet Muhammad to the Last Day have to believe in and follow.

— Daddy, is there any saying of our Prophet in the Qur'an?

— No, my dear son. There are only Allah's words in the Noble Qur'an. Do you know how sensitive our Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was in keeping his words out of the Qur'an?

In the early days of Islam, our beloved Prophet strongly banned his words from being written down. Thus he ordered his Companions "to tear it down if there had been any writing about his words." After the danger of confusing his words with the verses of the Qur'an had passed, he allowed those who wished to write his words down.

— Daddy I wonder how did the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) received the Qur'an.

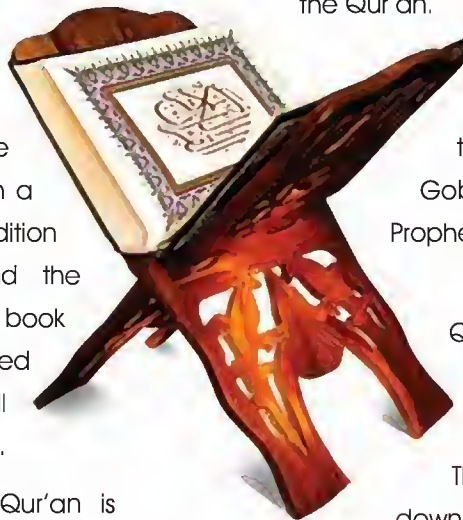
— There is an angel who takes Allah's commands to the prophets. His name is Gabriel. Gabriel brought the Qur'an to our Prophet.

— How did Gabriel bring the Qur'an? I am sure he brought it in a nice package.

— No, my smart son. The Noble Qur'an did not come down as a written book. It was sent in a special way called revelation.

— What is revelation, daddy?

— Revelation means to talk secretly and to whisper. It is the way that Gabriel takes God's commands to our Prophet. Gabriel used to speak the verses that he brought to our Prophet. And our Prophet had his companions write and memorize these verses.



— "Dad! I wish we had been born at the time of our beloved Prophet. And I wish we had seen how the Qur'an was revealed. I wish we had the chance to watch his beautiful face and to listen to the Qur'an from his mouth. "

— "You may try to put on your wings of imagination and fly to those days. What do you say? Are you ready for such a trip?"

— "Yes, dad, I am ready."

— Then let's go.

Our first destination is Medina. We are going to the city of the Prophet. Close your eyes.

Here we are Now you can open your eyes. This is Medina.

Let's find our Prophet. I do not think we will have a problem finding him, for he usually spends his time in his mosque. Let's check there first.

Yes, yes he is here. Look! The one sitting in the middle of the crowd is our Prophet Muhammad. Don't you recognize him? Look! He is the one with the gleaming face and black eyes. His head is a little bit big and his eyebrows

arched like the new moon. He has a thick beard and curly hair. His flesh is soft and he is well-built. You have recognized him now, haven't you? This is our Prophet.

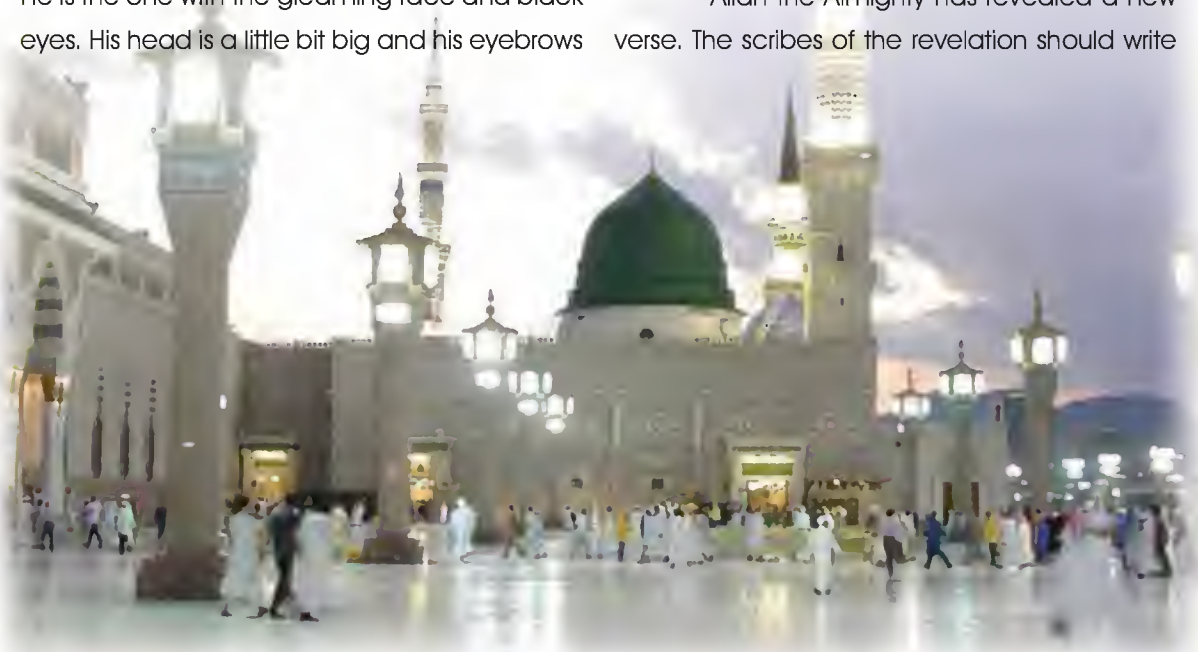
We are just in time. You were wondering how our Prophet was receiving the revelation. I think we are going to witness it together.

Look! Our Prophet's face is getting pale. Do you see the sweat drops on his forehead? Everybody is silent. Eyes are fixed to the ground. That means Gabriel (peace be upon him) is bringing a new order from Allah. This is why our Prophet looks tired and absentminded.

Look he opened his eyes. His eyes are shining. His face is illuminated by the light of new revelation.

Look at the friends of our Prophet. As you know we call them *ashab* or Companions. Companions are curious as to what the new command of Allah the Almighty is. They are excitedly waiting to hear what our Prophet is going to say. Look he is beginning to talk:

— Allah the Almighty has revealed a new verse. The scribes of the revelation should write



this verse in to the surat al-Baqara. I am reciting it slowly. Listen carefully. Learn it and teach it to those who are not here.

Allah the Almighty says:

"It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but the real righteous person is the one

Who believes in Allah and the Last Day and the angels and the Book and the prophets, and

Gives away wealth out of love for Allah to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for the emancipation of the captives,

And keeps up prayer and pays the poor-rate; and then keep their promises when they promise,

And those who are patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflicts-- these are the people who are true (to themselves) and these are the people who guard (themselves against evil). (Baqara 2; 177)*

— You see, my son! As soon as our Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) gets a revelation from Allah the Almighty, he teaches it to his Companions and has them write it down. After our Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) leaves, his Companions will recite these verses, memorize them, and teach them to those who have not heard them.

— Thank you dad for this imaginative journey. I felt like I was really living in those days. Well, in how many years did it take for our Prophet to receive the entire Qur'an?

— The first revelation was sent in 610 in Mecca. After that the revelation continued for

13 years in Mecca, for 10 years in Medina, for a total of 23 years.

— Daddy! I do not want to keep you from reciting the Noble Qur'an any longer, but I have one last question. Why did Allah not send the Qur'an all at once but instead interspersed within a 23 year period?

— To give Muslims the chance to learn it well and to learn it more easily. If it had been sent all at once, it would have been very difficult to write it down and learn it. This is why the Noble Qur'an was revealed in pieces whenever an incident happened or a question was asked. And thus the believers absorbed the new verses in their souls. They followed them in their lives and protected them from being changed.

Now it is our turn my son. We will read the Qur'an and learn Allah's commands and prohibitions. We will accept His advices. We will live in accordance with our religion and leave the Qur'an to the following generations.

Bakr has now known why his father regarded the recitation of the Qur'an so important. It was because the Qur'an is the message sent by Allah. It is a book that should be thoughtfully read, understood, and applied in our lives.

M. Yaşar Kandemir

(Quoted with some adaptations)

* From now on whenever there is a reference to a verse from the Qur'an, we will state the title of the chapter, and then the number of the chapter and finally the number of the verse/s.

PEOPLE NEED REVELATION

Our eyes are one of the most significant parts of our body. We see and gather information about the beings around us by means of our eyes. But our eyes have two limitations: The first one is that our eyes need light to see the objects. We cannot see them without light. The second one is the fact that our eyes do not have the capacity to see everything. We cannot see many minute objects, like viruses or atoms, with our bare eyes. We need to get help from some instruments such as microscope to be able to see such beings.

Our intellect is the most significant characteristic that sets us apart from the rest of the creation. We distinguish the good from evil with our intellect. We use it to decide whether something is harmful or not. However, like our eyes, our intellect also has some limits. Alone it is not enough to distinguish right from wrong, or beneficial from harmful. Just like we need physical light to see, we also need the light of revelation to be able to use our intellect in the right way. Similarly we need revelation in matters of the afterlife, Hell, and Paradise which we cannot understand by only our reason.

The revelation sent by Allah is a light showing the straight path to our intellect and illuminating our way in this life. We can know our Creator and comprehend the goal of our creation. We also get help from the guidance of revelation to find answers of the questions like:

- ❖ What is the meaning of life?
- ❖ How should the order of our life be?
- ❖ What are our duties and responsibilities towards Allah?
- ❖ What is going to happen to us after death?
- ❖ Is there resurrection after death?
- ❖ Where and how are we going to see the results of our actions in this world?

Our Lord the Almighty has communicated with us through the books and prophets that He sent. Since Adam (peace be upon him), all prophets brought us the words and messages of Allah. These messages and words sent by Allah are called wahy (or revelation).



DIVINE BOOKS



:Allah the Exalted says

"...And those who believe in the Revelation sent to you, and sent before your time..."

(al-Baqara 2; 4)

One of the principles of Islamic faith is to believe in the fact that there are some books sent by Allah the Almighty and that all the information in these books are true.

Allah the Exalted revealed His messages to His prophets either directly or by means of an angel. The prophets notified the people about the revelation they had received. The books consisting of the commands, prohibitions, and advices of our Lord Almighty are called "Divine books." We learn the principles of faith, rules related to the acts of worship and how we need to live in this world from these books. We obey the orders in these books and try to gain the pleasure of Allah the Almighty.

Depending on the people's needs, Our Lord Almighty sent to some of His prophets small books consisting only of a few pages (suhuf) and to some other prophets more comprehensive books.

Besides these pages, four books were sent to four prophets. These four books are:

The small books are hundred pages in total and they are:

Ten pages to Adam (peace be upon him),

Fifty pages to Seth (peace be upon him),

Thirty pages to Enoch (peace be upon him),

And ten pages to Abraham (peace be upon him)

The Torah:

It was revealed to Moses (peace be upon him). The Noble Qur'an tells us that the Torah is one of the Divine books that were sent to guide people to the straight path. This is why Muslims believe that the original Torah was a book comprised of the words of Allah.

Torah was sent to the sons of Israel through Moses (peace be upon him); however the sons of Israel (or the Jewish people) could not manage to protect it as it had been sent by Allah the Almighty. The original copy of the Torah was lost. It was rewritten by the Jewish scholars after a long period of time. Even though the Torah was originally sent to Moses

(peace be upon him) by Allah the Almighty, it was later corrupted. In the course of time it was however changed by people. Because of this corruption, The Torah that we have today has lost its status of being a Divine book.

Allah the Exalted says:

"And before this [the Qur'an], there was the Book of Moses as a guide and a mercy..."

(Ahqaf 46; 12)

The Psalms of David

It was sent to David (peace be upon him). Since David (S.A.) had a beautiful voice, when he recited the Psalms, everybody who listened to him would be deeply affected. Today the Book of Psalms is a part of Old Testament. In its current form, the Psalms is a book of advices which is written in the form of poems and does not contain any commands and prohibitions.

Allah the Exalted says:

"...We preferred some of the Prophets above others, and unto David We gave the Psalms."

(al-Isra 17; 55)

The Gospel

It is the book revealed to Jesus (peace be upon him).

The original form of the Gospel was sent by Allah the Almighty. However, just like Torah and the Psalms, it was corrupted by human beings. The Gospel was not recorded in writing during the time of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him), but after his death several versions of the Gospel were written. In the first Council of Nicaea convened in 325, a council of Christian bishops selected four of these Gospel as canonical. They were written

by Mark, Mothew, John, and Luke and thus they have become known by their authors' names. These are the gospels that we have today.

Allah the Exalted says:

"...We sent him [Jesus] the Gospel; therein was guidance and light, and confirmation of the law that had come before him: guidance and an admonition to those who fear Allah."

(al-Maidah 5; 46)

The Holy Qur'an

It is the last Divine book sent by Allah the Almighty. It was revealed to our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). Some of the Divine books have been lost and some of them have been corrupted by humans. But our Almighty Lord sent us all the messages and principles included in the earlier books through the Noble Qur'an.

As a Muslim, we have to believe in the uncorrupted original forms of the earlier books not however the current versions. We accept all the sacred books sent by Allah the Almighty. We

also believe in the fact that only the Noble Qur'an among them has come down to us in its original unchanged form.

Allah the Exalted says:

"Surely We have revealed the Reminder [the Qur'an] and We will most surely be its guardian."

(Hijr 15; 9)

THE THINGS THAT WE GAIN FROM BELIEVING IN THE DIVINE BOOKS

DIVINE BOOKS

- Gives us the chance to be in continuous communication with our Lord Almighty
- Teaches us our goal for coming to this world and our responsibilities in this world
- Protects the principles of our religion from alterations and corruption
- Narrates the significant periods of human history in order to make the following generations get lessons from them

We would repeatedly read the sentences of a letter coming from our loved ones. We do not forget some of its sentences for our entire lifetime. Divine books which contain the words of Allah the Almighty are like a letter sent to humanity. It is such a great letter that it comes from Allah the Almighty, the Lord of the universe, and every single word of it contains numerous beauties and wisdom. When we read it, it is as if we are having a conversation with our Lord. Every time we recite or listen to these Divine words coming from the Eternal, they re-affect our souls. They increase our love for Allah the Almighty. And thus **they give us the chance to be in continuous communication with our Lord Almighty.**

Our beloved Prophet says:

"I am leaving you two important things, one of which is the Book of Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, and that is the rope of Allah. He who holds fast thereto would be on right guidance and he who abandons it would be in error." (peace and blessings be upon him)

(Muslim, Fada'il al-Sahaba, 37)



Divine books tell us the commands and prohibitions of our Exalted Lord. They teach us our goal for coming to this world and our responsibilities in this world. They command us to worship only Allah and to take his messengers as examples in our lives. They advise us to do things that benefit the people. They encourage us to be righteous, to act justly, and to help the needy. **They want us to be the servants of Allah who abstain from injustice, treat everyone kindly, and become people with good morals.**

Allah the Exalted says:

"This [Qur'an] is a clear message for mankind in order that they may be warned thereby, and that they may know that Allah is only one God, and that men of understanding may take heed."

(Ibrahim 14; 52)



The articles of faith constitute the foundations of a religion. When the original forms of the Divine books which inform us about these principles, get corrupted, then people begin to deviate towards wrong beliefs. They get away from the faith in the Oneness of Allah. They begin to regard the prohibited things as permitted and the permitted things as prohibited. Then Allah the Exalted resends His message to renew the corrupted one. He teaches people the right beliefs and behaviors once again. In this way the Divine books sent by Allah the Almighty **protect the principles of our religion from alterations and corruption.** The Noble Qur'an is the final book sent by our Lord Almighty. It consists of all the beauties and truths of all of the

Allah the Exalted says:

"He has revealed to you the Book with truth, verifying that which is before it, and He revealed the Torah and the Gospel aforetime as guidance for the people."

(Al-Imran 3; 3)

preceding Divine books. Peoples' adventure of life has begun with Adam (peace be upon him). Since then many civilizations have been founded by human beings. Those who followed the footsteps of the prophets and did good deeds have always been remembered with gratitude. They have become examples for the following generations; whereas those who did not accept the guidance of the prophets and the Divine books used this earth just for their own benefits. They oppressed the weak and treated them unfairly. They killed the innocent people. They employed their wealth for the wrong purposes and, thus they departed away from Allah's mercy. They left very bad traces and were erased from the pages of history. Therefore the divine **books narrate such significant periods of human history in order to make the following generations get lessons from them.**

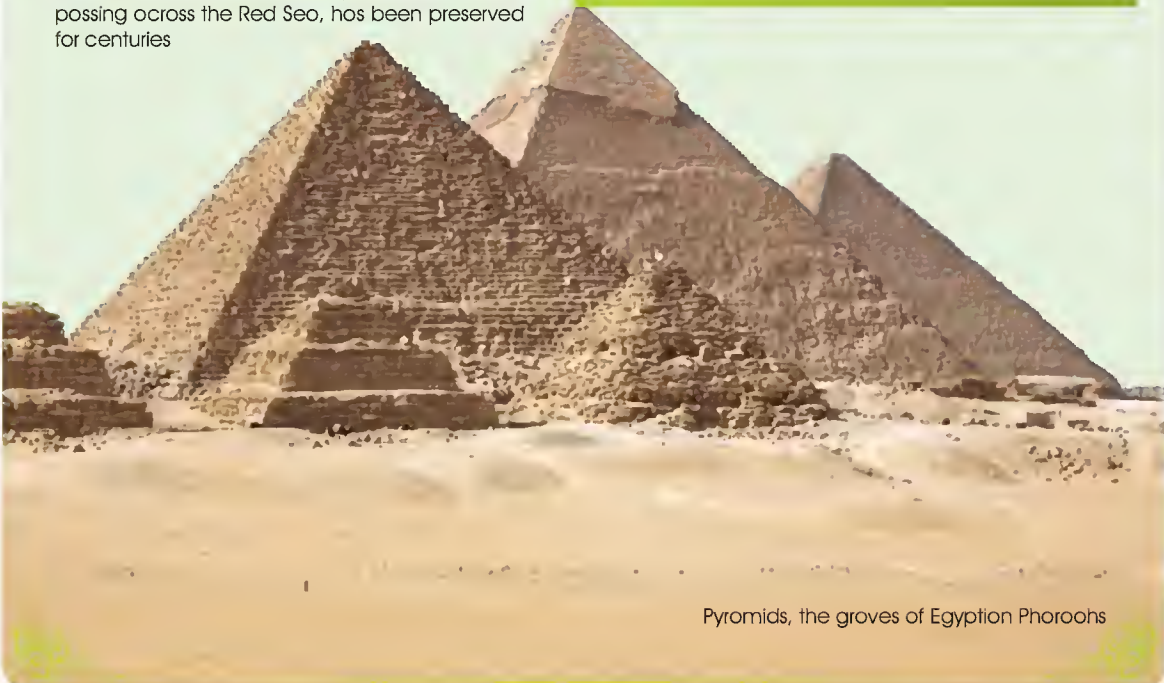


The body of Pharaoh, who got drowned while passing across the Red Sea, has been preserved for centuries

Allah the Exalted says:

"In their histories there is certainly a lesson for men of understanding. It is not a narrative which could be forged, but a verification of what is before it and a distinct explanation of all things and a guide and a mercy to the people who believe."

(Yusuf 12; 111)



Pyramids, the graves of Egyptian Pharaohs

LET'S KNOW OUR SACRED BOOK

The Internal Order of the Holy Qur'an

The Holy Qur'an is a miraculous divine book which cannot be reproduced by human beings. It is also called "*Kalamullah*" which means the Word of Allah. Through angel Gabriel, it was revealed to our beloved Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) piece by piece in 23 years. It consists of about 600 pages.

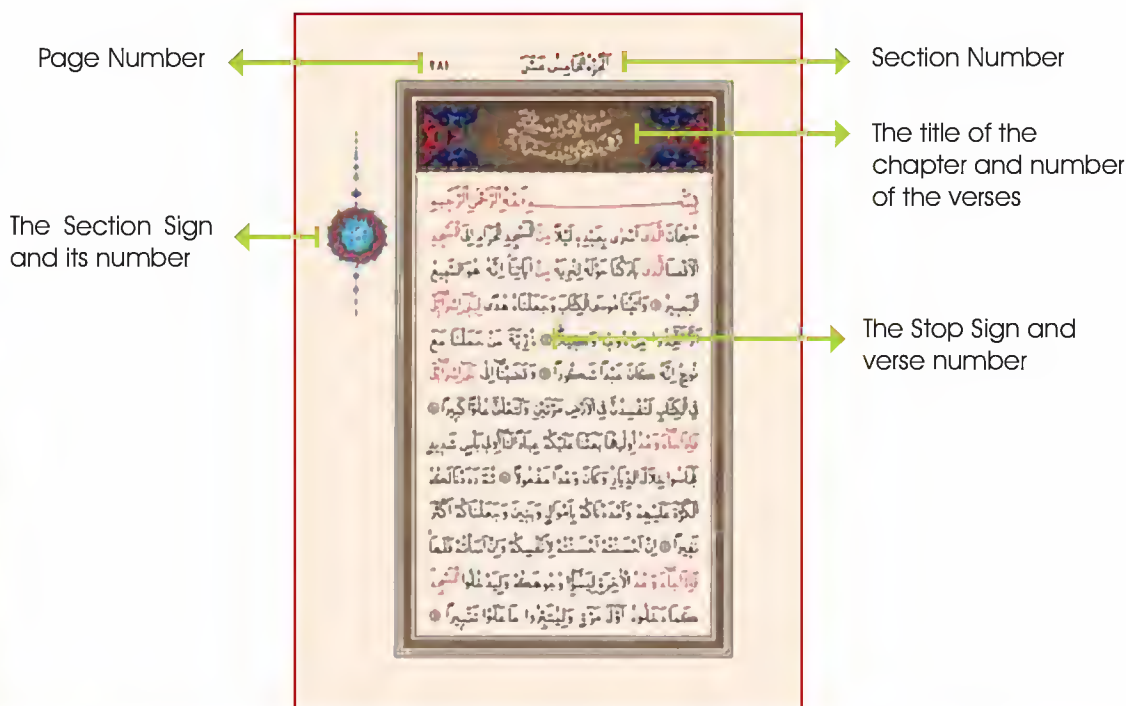
It has a special internal design formed from verses, chapters, and sections. Verses of the Qur'an, which are called in Arabic "*ayat*," may contain one or more sentences. The parts formed by verses are called chapters, or "*surahs*" of the Qur'an. There are 114 chapters in the Noble Qur'an. Every chapter has a unique title and each chapter's number of verses is different than the others.

Chapters are not arranged in the order of their revelation but in the order that was commanded by Allah the Almighty. The longest chapter is the *surat al-Baqarah* which is the

second chapter of the Qur'an and consists of 286 verses, while the shortest chapter is the *surat al-Kawthar* which is the 108th chapter of the Qur'an and contains only three verses. The Noble Qur'an begins with *surat al-Fatiha* and ends with *surat al-Nas*.

Every part which consists of 20 pages of the Qur'an is called "*juz*" or section. There are total of thirty sections in the Qur'an. Dividing the Qur'an into such parts makes easier to memorize and read it.

The Noble Qur'an is revealed in Arabic. This is why it has been translated into several languages to help people who do not understand Arabic. These translations into other languages are also called the meaning of the Qur'an (*maad*). We can read and learn the detailed explanations and commentaries of the verses in the books of Qur'anic commentary (*tafseer*).



THE FIRST REVELATION

Our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was known by his good morals in his society. He never worshipped the idols and never ate from the meat of the animals sacrificed for the idols. He did not drink alcoholic beverages and gamble. He never attended the festivals and ceremonies organized in the name of the idols. He gained everybody's praise and trust by his truthfulness, trustworthiness, commitment to his promises, shyness, generosity, and dignity.

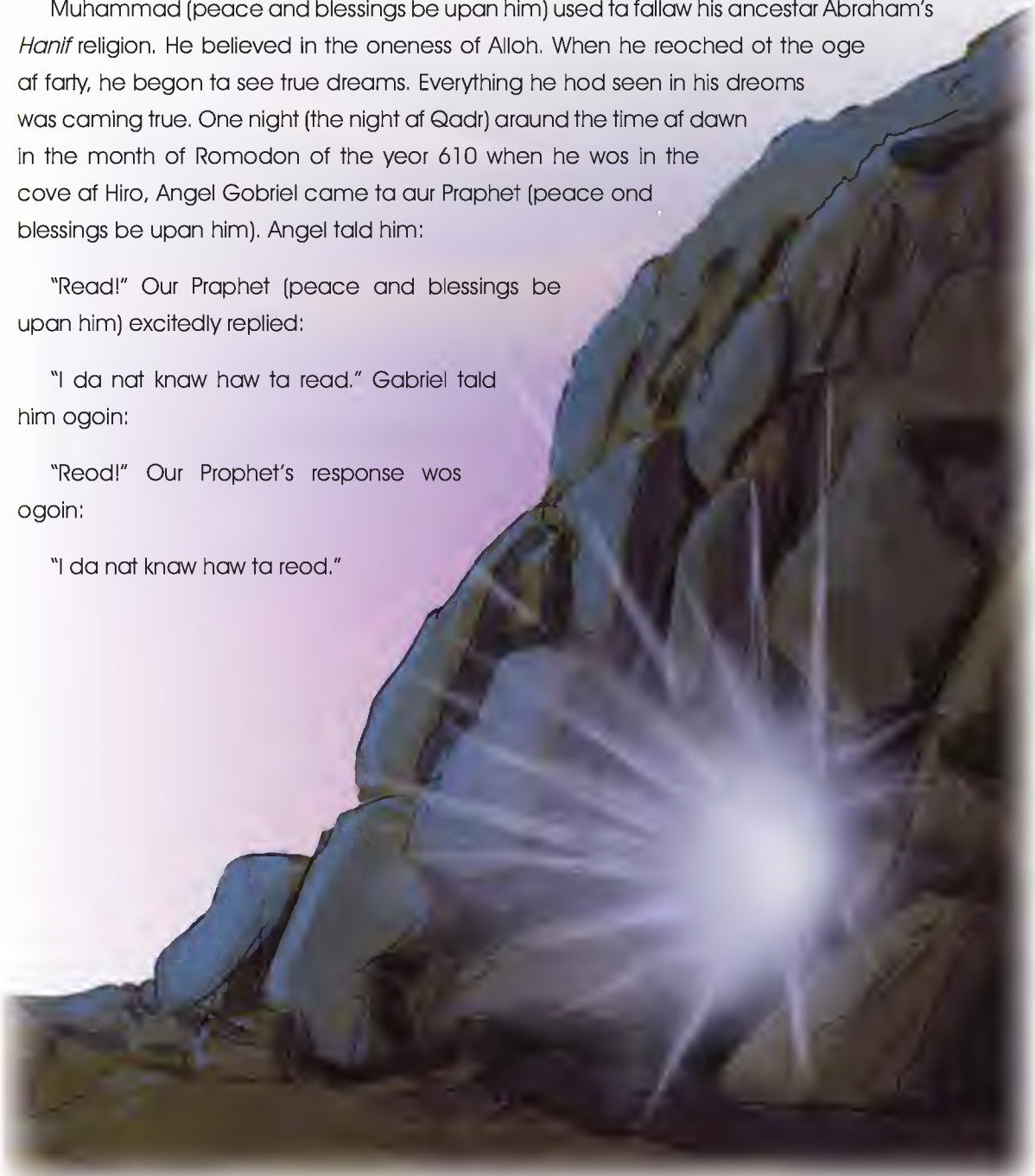
Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) used to follow his ancestor Abraham's *Hanif* religion. He believed in the oneness of Allah. When he reached the age of forty, he began to see true dreams. Everything he had seen in his dreams was coming true. One night (the night of Qadr) around the time of dawn in the month of Ramadan of the year 610 when he was in the cave of Hira, Angel Gabriel came to our Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). Angel told him:

"Read!" Our Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) excitedly replied:

"I do not know how to read." Gabriel told him again:

"Read!" Our Prophet's response was again:

"I do not know how to read."



Angel Gabriel one more time told him to read and then he (angel) recited the first five verses of the *surat al-Alaq* (96). The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) repeated these first verses of the Qur'an. Below are the meanings of these five verses:

"Read in the name of your Lord Who created.

He created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood:

Read and your Lord is Most Bountiful,

Who taught (to write) with the pen

Taught man that which he knew not."

(al-Alaq 96; 1-5)

After repeating the words of the angel of revelation, our Prophet stood up. He was puzzled and shaking with fear. He left the cave. This time the same voice was coming from the heaven. The strong voice of Gabriel (peace be upon him) echoed everywhere:

"O Muhammad! You are the Messenger of Allah and I am Gabriel."

Upon this scene the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) got even more

excited and went down the mountain with his heart beating wildly, until he came to his wife Khadijah. Our mother Khadijah became worried for his nervousness. Our Prophet was still shaking. He went to his bed and said, 'Cover me! Cover me!' Soon he fell asleep and when he woke up, he told what had happened. Our mother Khadijah consoled him saying:

"Do not be afraid! Allah will never disgrace you. You uphold the ties of kinship, speak truthfully, help the poor and destitute, serve your guests generously and assist those who are stricken by calamity. You help those who cannot work and those who are in need."

These nice words of our mother Khadijah made our Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) very happy. Then they went to Waraqah ibn Nawfal, the son of Khadijah's paternal uncle. Waraqah was an old man who knew both Torah and the Gospel very well. When the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) told him what he had seen, Waraqah got very excited and said:

"I swear by Allah you are the Prophet of this ummah. And the angel you have seen was Gabriel. He is the same angel who brought the commands of Allah to Moses and Jesus, too." Waraqah continued his words:

"I wish I were young and could help you when your people drive you out of your town."

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) wonderingly asked:

"Are they really going to drive me out of my town?" Waraqah replied,

"Yes. There has never come a prophet with the like of that which you have brought, but he was not persecuted and driven out of his country."

Allah the Exalted says:

"And it is of the Qur'an which We have revealed in portions so that you may read it to the people by slow degrees, and We have revealed it by stages."

(Al-Isra 17; 106)

Writing the Holy Qur'an Down and Memorizing It

Our Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) would immediately convey the verses of the Qur'an to his Companions. He would also make some of his Companions, known as the scribes of the revelation, write these newly revealed verses down. In this way verses of the Noble Qur'an were not only memorized by our Prophet and his Companions but also written down as soon as they were revealed.

In accordance with the means of the time, the scribes of the revelation wrote down the verses of the Qur'an upon materials which could be written upon, such as thin flat stones, the shoulder-blades of camels, leafless palm-branches and stumps of palm-branches, ribs of animals, pieces of cloth or of skin, or papyrus, or wooden boards, etc. Our Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) would first recite the newly revealed verses and make the scribes write them down; and then he would ask the scribes to read what they wrote and check whether there were any mistakes in their writings. The first four caliphs, Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali (may Allah be pleased with them) were among the scribes of the revelations. Other famous Companions, such as Zaid ibn Thabit, Ubai ibn Ka'b, and Muadh ibn Jabal, also worked as the scribes of the revelations.

Our Prophet also recited the Qur'anic verses in his prayers and at other times. He explained the rules and subtleties contained in the verses to the believers. Every year in the month of

Ramadan, he would recite and review the verses, which had been revealed by that time, with the Angel Gabriel. In the month of Ramadan of the year that the Prophet passed away, they reviewed the whole Qur'an twice.

Compilation of the Holy Qur'an in the Form of a Book

The Noble Qur'an was both memorized and protected by writing it down during the lifetime of our Prophet, however these written verses and chapters of the Qur'an were not yet compiled in the form of a book. It was because

revelation continued to come during the

Prophet's lifetime. And because the

revelation was not complete

until the end of our Prophet's

life, it was impossible to

compile the Qur'an in

the form of a book.

After the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) had passed away, Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) was elected as

the caliph. During his caliphate

many Companions who were Hafiz (or knew the entire Qur'an by heart) were martyred in the battle. The decrease in the number of the Companions who knew the whole Qur'an by heart made Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) worried. So he offered Abu Bakr the compilation of the materials upon which the Qur'anic verses had been written. Thereupon Abu Bakr formed a commission under the leadership of the Prophet's head-scribe Zaid ibn Thabit. All members of this commission knew the entire Qur'an by heart. After about a year-long of serious work the scattered materials



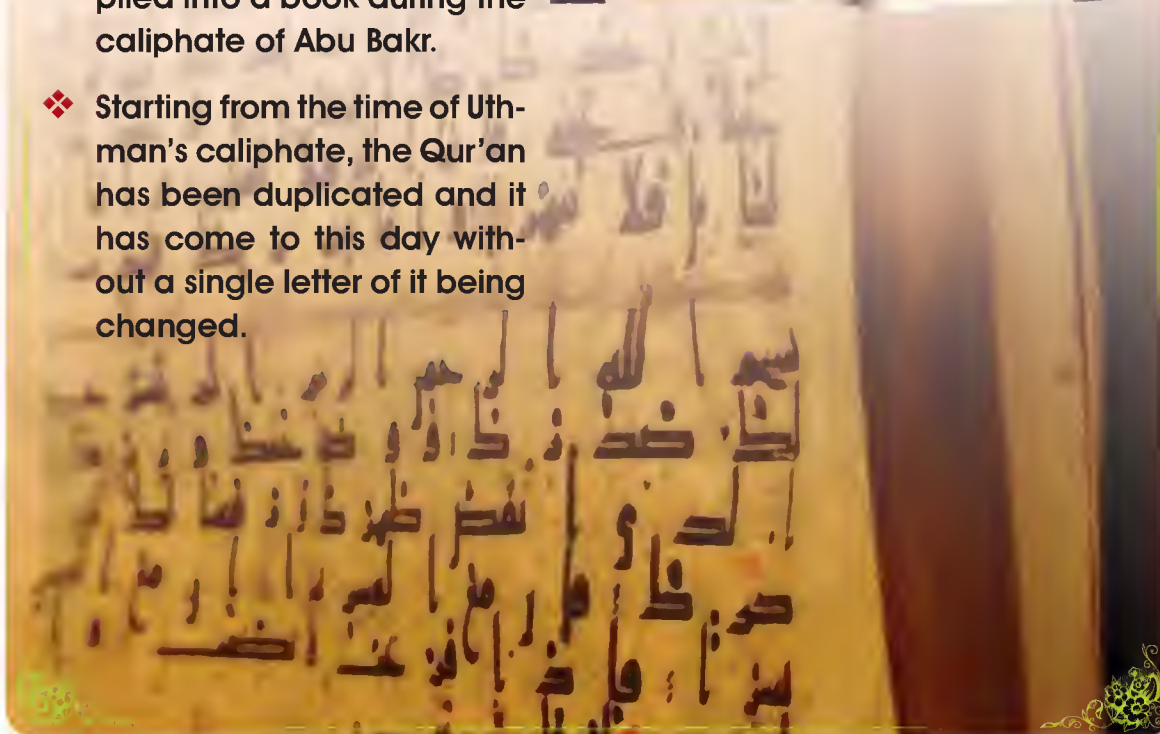
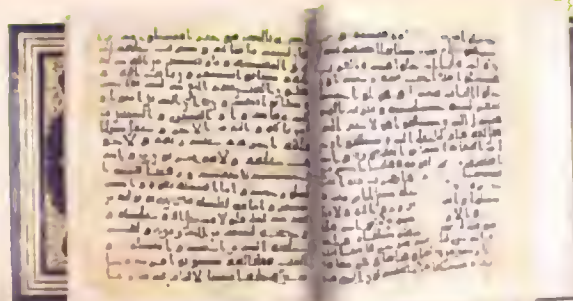
were compiled and the verses of the Qur'an got written on clean pages. Finally these pages were put together in the form of a book and submitted to Abu Bakr.

Duplication of the Holy Qur'an

During the caliphates of Umar and Uthman (may Allah be pleased with them) the Muslim land reached into new regions by means of conquests. People from different languages, cultures, and races were converting into Islam. Everybody wanted to read and learn what the Noble Qur'an was saying.

In order to provide the proper circumstances for the believers to learn the Qur'an, Caliph Uthman decided to duplicate the copy compiled during Abu Bakr's caliphate. Uthman formed a commission again under the leadership of Zaid Ibn Thabit and had them duplicate the Noble Qur'an. One of the copies was left in Medina. Others were sent to Mecca, Kufa, Basra, Damascus, Yemen, and Bahrain. Along with the copies of the Qur'an, a teacher of the Qur'an was also sent to each one of these centers.

- ❖ The Noble Qur'an was memorized and written down during the time of our Prophet.
- ❖ It was collected and compiled into a book during the caliphate of Abu Bakr.
- ❖ Starting from the time of Uthman's caliphate, the Qur'an has been duplicated and it has come to this day without a single letter of it being changed.



Merits of the Recitation of the Holy Qur'an

The Noble Qur'an is the most superior and the most beautiful of the words. Our beloved Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said that: "The best of you is the one who learns and teaches the Qur'an." This is why our most important task regarding the Qur'an is to read, learn, and teach it to others. Then we need to live in accordance with its regulations.

Recitation of the Qur'an is an act of worship. Our Lord Almighty has given the good news of Paradise and its blessings to those who recite the Qur'an and apply its rules in their lives. Our

Prophet informs us that the parents of such believers will also find special rewards in the Hereafter.

Our beloved Prophet would recite the Qur'an slowly and distinctly. He also advised his followers to recite the Qur'an correctly and nicely. He wanted his ummah to recite the Qur'an much. He said that those who recite it beautifully will be with the angels. He gave special good news for those who have difficulty in reciting but continue to try to recite it.



Our beloved Prophet says:

If anyone recites the Qur'an and acts according to its contents, on the Day of Judgment his parents will be given a crown to wear whose light is better than the light of the sun in the houses of this world if it were among you. So imagine the reward of who "acts according to its contents

(Abu Dawud, Sunan, I, 355)

Allah the Exalted says:

"Lo! Those who read the Scripture of Allah ... For He [Allah] will pay them back fully their rewards and give them more out of His grace..."

(Fatir 35: 29-30)

CONTENTS OF THE QUR'AN

The Holy Qur'an has a distinctive style. It deals with different topics in the same verse or in the same chapter. It uses a method of expression which encompasses all aspects of human beings. On the one hand it appeals to human intelligence; on the other hand it takes people's psychological and spiritual state into consideration. Its object is not just to give information; rather it aims to transform the knowledge into faith and the faith into good behavior and morals.

Before everything else the Holy Qur'an tries to bring people into the correct faith. It teaches us the reason for our existence in this world. It introduces Allah to us. It shows us the way we

should deal with ourselves, with our fathers and mothers, with other people, and with the rest of the creation.

The main subjects that are emphasized by the Qur'an are: the issues of faith, acts of worship, and principles of morality. Besides these, there are also verses which guide us in many aspects of human relations. Stories of the prophets and the incidents experienced by the people of the past are narrated in the Qur'an for us to take lessons from them.

When we examine the Noble Qur'an, we see that it mainly contains and guides us in the following areas:

The Main Subject Matters of the Qur'an

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Articles of Faith | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supplication |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acts of Worship | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Creation and the Universe |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moral Principles | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prophets and the People of the Past |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lawful and Unlawful | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social Relations | |

Articles of Faith

The most important aspect of the Noble Qur'an is that it introduces our Lord to us. It tells us about the existence and oneness of Allah. It introduces Allah to us through His names and Divine attributes.

All of the articles of faith that are taught by the Qur'an are related to faith in Allah. In other words according to the Qur'an the principles of faith cannot be separated. Those who believe in Allah also believe in His angels, the books that were sent by Him, prophets, and the Last Day. They also believe in that everything happens by Allah's Will and Wish.

Acts of Worship

The Noble Qur'an commands us to be servants of Allah. It gives us the general principles in regarding worship instead of giving details. It attracts our attention to the close relationship between faith and worship. It tells us that worship must be performed just for the sake of Allah without showing pride. Through various examples it shows us the wrongness of worshipping anything other than Allah.

Acts of worship, like ritual prayer, almsgiving, fasting, and pilgrimage, are especially expressed in the Qur'an. Every act that pleases our Lord is accepted as a sign of good servitude. Everything that benefits human beings, including a smiling face and a few nice words are all considered within the scope of worship.



Moral Principles

The Holy Qur'an regards good morality as being very important. It tries to make good morals prevail in all aspects of life. This is why the Qur'an speaks about the principles of good morality in many of its verses. It directs people to goodness and righteousness. It commands to show kindness to parents, and to help the relatives, the poor, and the destitute. It prohibits wasting resources and giving harm to others' life or property. It always attracts our attention to the principles of good manners such as keeping promises, being trustworthy, and keeping good relations with others. It expresses that such manners will take human beings to happiness both in this world and in the Hereafter.

Creation and the Universe



The Noble Qur'an brings attention to the universe and the created things therein. It invites people to think about creation and the reason for their creation. It continuously expresses that Allah has created this universe from a state of nothingness.

The perfect order of the universe is stated in the Qur'an. It invites attention to the creation of human beings, animals, plants, earth, skies, the Sun, moon, and numerous more beings. It is expressed that there are signs that show Allah's existence and unity in the creation of every single being. We are asked to carefully examine these signs and recognize the endless power and mercy of Allah the Almighty.

Supplication

Prayer is the essence of worship. We express our gratitude to our Lord through our supplications. Whenever we need His help and whenever we feel dispirited, we run to His gates of mercy and forgiveness. We open our hands and ask help from Him. We take refuge in our Exalted Lord's clemency and forgiveness.

Samples of sincere and genuine prayers, especially samples from the prayers of the prophets, took an important place in our Noble Book. In the Qur'an our Lord Almighty teaches us how to pray to Him. He commands us to pray only to Him and tells us that He is the only One who can respond to prayers.

Lawful and Unlawful

What is permitted by Islam is called Halal or lawful; and what is prohibited by it is called haram or unlawful. The Noble Qur'an explains the lawful and unlawful things. It states that the beneficial, good, and clean things are lawful. It also states that the lawful things are enough for human beings and no one can declare unlawful what is made lawful by Allah the Almighty. It prohibits eating and drinking harmful things like blood, pig flesh, the dead animals' flesh, and alcoholic beverages. It also bans the unjust ways of earning livelihood such as fraud, theft, usury, gambling, and bribery. It counts them among the great wrongs committed against Allah and the Muslim society. It warns all humanity by citing the bad examples of those who violate other peoples' rights by cheating them in measures and balance.

Social Relations

The main object of the Holy Qur'an is to raise individuals into people who have strong faith, true knowledge, and good morals. It aims to make a virtuous society formed from such individuals. The Noble Qur'an establishes the principles and guidelines for our social relations. This is why there are several verses in the Qur'an which organize the social relations such as marriage, divorce, trade, transactions, inheritance, governance, and education. In addition to such regulatory verses, there are also verses in the Qur'an related to crimes and punishments for those who violate the rights of individuals and society. Murder, burglary, and slandering or harming peoples' chastity are all accepted as great crimes in the Qur'an. Qur'anic verses also describe how these crimes will be punished and what will be the amounts of punishments.

Prophets and the People of the Past

Starting with Adam (peace be upon him) history of humanity is filled with lessons. The Holy Qur'an provides examples from the lives of prophets and the peoples of the past in order to give the following generations something to take lessons from. It talks about the good and bad experiences of the societies. It asks people to take heed and not to fall into same mistakes.



OUR PROPHET AND THE HOLY QUR'AN

Our beloved Prophet loved to recite the Holy Qur'an. He would recite it slowly and distinctly. Prophet's recitation would give people a different taste and beauty. People who listened to his recitation would immediately be affected from it. One day the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) had recited the surah Tin (95) in the night prayer. One of his companions said that he had never listened to anybody who had a nicer voice than the Prophet's.

Our Prophet would sometimes recite the Qur'an out loud upon his riding beast. For instance on the day of the conquest of Mecca he recited the first verses of surah al-Fath (48) on his camel. Those companions who listened to his recitation mentioned that his beautiful voice was not erased from their ears and hearts.

Our beloved Prophet would think about the verses he recited and say prayers suitable to their meaning. When he recited a verse about praising Allah the Almighty, he would praise Him. If he recited a verse about asking things from Allah, he would pray for Him. Sometimes he would think about one single verse for all night. One night he repeated the verse "If You punish them, lo! They are Your slaves, and if You forgive them (lo! they are Your slaves). Lo! You, only You, are the Mighty, the Wise." (al-Maidah 5; 118) several times. And then he begged Allah the Almighty out of his love for his ummah and because of his concerns that they might get punished. He asked Allah to forgive his ummah.



Sometimes our Prophet would get moved by the verses he was reciting and tears would flow down his blessed cheeks. He also advised his Companions to recite the Qur'an sorrowfully.

One day our mother Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) was asked:

"Would you tell us the most amazing thing that you have seen with the Prophet?"

Aisha replied:

"What was not amazing with him?" And then she narrated the following incident:

"One night he went to bed. Later in the night he asked my permission and got up. He performed ablution and began to pray. During his prayer he began to shed tears so much that his tears were flowing down to his chest. He bowed down and cried. He continued to cry during prostration and when he raised his head from the ground. This state continued till Bilal came and pronounced the call for dawn prayer. When Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him) saw the Prophet crying, he asked:

"O Messenger of Allah! Even though your past and future sins have already been forgiven, what makes you cry?" Our Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) replied:

"Should I not be a thanking servant of Allah?"

He then stated that he had received a revelation at night and that these verses should be carefully read and contemplated about. Then he recited the following verses:

"Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day there are signs for men

who understand. Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth say: "Our Lord! You have not created this in vain! Glory be to You. Save us then from the chastisement of the fire." (Al-Imran 3; 190-191)

Our Prophet would recite the Qur'an in the month of Ramadan more than the rest of the year. Gabriel (peace be upon him) would come to our Prophet more often in that month and they would together review the verses that had been revealed up to that time.

Allah's Messenger also liked very much to listen to other peoples' Qur'an recitation. He would ask his Companions with nice voice to recite the Qur'an for him. He once asked Abdullah Ibn Masud (may Allah be pleased with him) to recite the Quran for him. Abdulloh ibn Mas'ud said to the Prophet,

"O messenger of Allah! How may I recite the Quran before you whereas it has been revealed to you?" Upon this the Prophet said,

"I love it much to hear the Quran from someone else." Then Abdullah Ibn Masud began to recite from surat al-Nisa (4). When he recited the verse, *"How will it be, then, when We bring from every people a witness and bring you as a witness against these?"* (4:41) the Prophet said, *"This is enough for now."* Ibn Masud the narrator of this incident said that "when I looked at the face of the Prophet, I saw tears rolling down both his eyes."

Our beloved Prophet adopted the Noble Qur'an as his measure for all aspects of life. He lived his life in accordance with the Qur'an. All his actions, behaviors, morals, and thoughts

were shaped by the verses of the Qur'an. Aisha, mother of the believers said to those who ask about the morals of the Prophet:

"Don't you read the Qur'an? His morality was based on the moral principles of the Qur'an."

By these words, Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) emphasized that the Prophet's actions and behaviors were in accordance with the Qur'an and he was like a living Qur'an. And owing to this attribute of the Prophet, Our

Exalted Lord has presented him to humanity as the best example.

The Holy Qur'an shaped not just the Prophet's life but also all the lives of the Muslims who were following him. The early generations of the believers acted in their personal and social lives according to the requirements of the Qur'an. By taking the Prophet as their example, they became the first practitioners of the Qur'an.

One night after the night prayer our mother Aisha came home a little late. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) asked why she was late. Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) replied:

"O Messenger of Allah! There was a man in the mosque. I have never seen anybody reciting the Qur'an better than him.

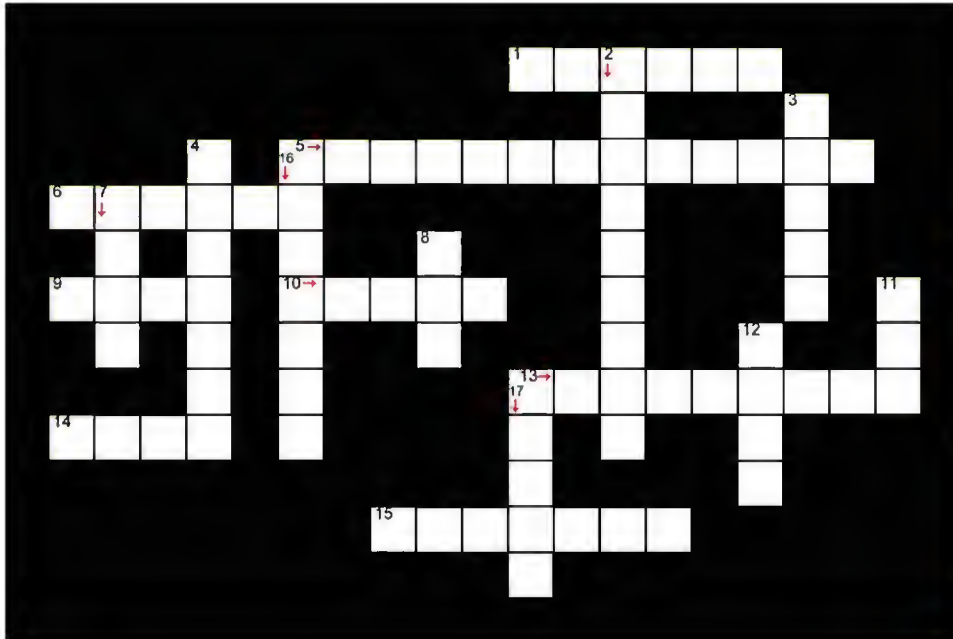
Allah's Messenger wondered who that man was, so he went to the mosque. our mother Aisha was following him. After our Prophet listened to the man's recitation, he turned to Aisha and said:

"This is Salim the freed slave of Hudaifa. Praise be to Allah Who has given to this ummah a man like Salim." (Ibn Majah, Iqamah, 176)



QUESTIONS

Crossword Puzzle



1. The first chapter of the Qur'an
2. The book that was revealed to Jesus (peace be upon him)
3. One who knows the entire Qur'an by heart
4. The angel who brings the revelation
5. The last one of the Divine books
6. The longest chapter of the Qur'an
7. Which chapter's verses were revealed first?
8. The term used for every 20 pages of the Qur'an
9. The night that the Qur'anic revelation began
10. The little Divine books
11. The last chapter of the Qur'an
12. Information and messages sent to humanity by Allah through His prophets
13. The book that was revealed to Moses (peace be upon him)
14. Translations of the Qur'an into other languages
15. The month that the Qur'anic revelation began
16. Detailed explanations and commentaries of the verses of the Qur'an; Qur'anic commentary
17. The book that was sent to David (peace be upon him)

Find the Correct Match

1	Allah the Exalted revealed His messages to His prophets	has come down to us in its original unchanged form.
2	Since Adam (peace be upon him), prophets brought us	the commands and prohibitions of our Exalted Lord.
3	We obey the orders in these books and ,	the beauties and truths of all of the preceding Divine books.
4	Depending on the people's needs, Our Lord Almighty sent	people begin to deviate to wrong beliefs.
5	We believe in that the Noble Qur'an	either directly or by means of an angel.
6	Divine books tell us	try to gain the pleasure of Allah the Almighty.
7	When the original forms of the Divine books get corrupted,	the words and messages of Allah.
8	The Noble Qur'an consists of	to some of His prophets small books called <i>suhuf</i>

Let's Test Ourselves

1. What is the term used for the Companions who wrote the revelation down during the Prophet's time?

- A) Companions
- B) Migrants
- C) Scribes of the revelation
- D) Helpers

2. Which one of the following information cannot be said about the Qur'an?

- A) It was revealed by the Angel Gabriel
- B) It was revealed in Arabic
- C) Its revelation began on the night of *mi'raj* (ascension).
- D) It has come down to us without any change

3. "Behold, Luqman said to his son when he admonished him: O my son Ascribe no partners unto Allah. Lo! To ascribe partners (unto Him) is a grievous wrong doing... O my son! Keep up prayer and enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and bear patiently that which befalls you; surely these acts require courage; And do not turn your face away from people in contempt, nor go about in the land exulting overmuch; surely Allah does not love any self-conceited boaster." (Luqman 31; 13-18)

Which one of the following actions is wrong according to the above mentioned verse?

- A) Not showing patience before the hardships
- B) To advice truthfulness to someone who lies
- C) To perform prayers
- D) Not to ascribe partners to Allah the Almighty

4.

- I. It has become easier to memorize
- II. It enabled to write the Qur'an down
- III. It gave a chance to learn the principles of the Qur'an well

These are the result of

- A) Piece by piece revelation of the Qur'an
- B) Revelation of the Qur'an in Arabic
- C) Revelation of the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad
- D) Revelation of the Qur'an through Angel Gabriel

5. What is the first reason for the revelation of the Qur'an?

- A) To recite it in our prayers
- B) To unite the Muslims
- C) To recite it after our deceased relatives
- D) To apply it in our lives

6. Which one of the following is not among the reasons for sending Divine books?

- A) To give commands and prohibitions
- B) To give encyclopedic information
- C) To establish moral principles
- D) To give information about the Hereafter

Let's fill in the blanks with the given words:

(The Book of Allah, the people, the Reminder, light, a crown, right guidance, its contents, the Torah, guardian, the Gospel, the Book, in portions)

1. "We sent him [Jesus] therein were guidance and, and confirmation of the law that had come before him: guidance and an admonition to those who fear Allah." (al-Maidah 5; 46)
2. "Surely We have revealed [the Qur'an] and We will most surely be its" (Hijr 15; 9)
3. "He has revealed to you with truth, verifying that which is before it, and He revealed and the Gospel aforetime as guidance for the people." (Al-Imran 3; 3)
4. "And it is a Quran which We have revealed so that you may read it to by slow degrees, and We have revealed it by stages." (Al-Isra 17; 106)
5. "I am leaving you two important things, one of which is....., the Exalted and Glorious, and that is the rape of Allah. He who holds it fast would be anand he who abandons it would be in error." (Muslim, Fada'il al-Sahaba, 37)
6. "If anyone recites the Qur'an and acts according to....., on the Day of Judgment his parents will be given to wear whose light is better than the light of the sun in the houses of this world. So imagine the reward of who acts according to its contents." (Abu Dawud, Sunan, I, 355)

Allah the Exalted says:

"This [Qur'an] is a clear message for mankind
in order that they may be warned thereby,
and that they may know that Allah is only one
God, and that men of understanding may
take heed."

(Ibrahim 14: 52)





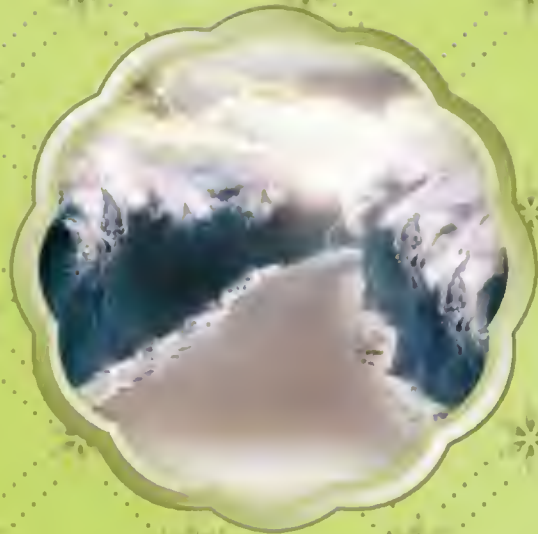
EXEMPLARY PEOPLE:



FAITH IN THE PROPHETS



- ❁ *Prophets and the Attributes of the Prophets*
- ❁ *Common Messages of the Prophets*
- ❁ *The things that We Gain from Believing in the Prophets*
- ❁ *There are the Best Examples for us in the Lives of the Prophets*
- ❁ *Our Prophet and the Other Prophets*



PROPHETS (MESSENGERS OF ALLAH)

Husain's homework was about **prophethood**. He was going to check the reference books and prepare for the subject and his friends were going to ask him whatever they wanted to ask about it. When the class started, his teacher asked him the first question:

— "Tell me Husain! **What does prophet mean?**"

— "Prophet is a person who delivers the orders of Allah to the people" replied Husain. His teacher liked Hussain's response and turned to the rest of the class:



— "It is your turn! Ask your friend whatever you want to learn. This way I will see how much you are interested in this subject."

Sulaiman raised his hand:

— **Can anybody be a prophet?**

Husain responded to his friends question as follows:

— "Prophethood is not a job which can be achieved by hard work or worship. Allah chooses whoever He wants among His servants as His messenger. Because prophethood is not an easy task to fulfill, our Lord Almighty entrusts this work to those who can do it best."

Ahmad raised his hand:

— **"Does prophethood pass from father to son like a sultanate or a monarchy?"**

— "There is no such rule, but there were some prophets whose sons took over their father's mission. For instance after Abraham, his sons Isaac and Ishmael became prophets. Similarly after Jacob his son Joseph; and after David his son Solomon (peace be upon them) became prophets. However, this is not because prophethood was something hereditary, but it was what Allah the Almighty deemed appropriate."

Batul said:

— "That means prophets' children were good people like their fathers."

— "This was not always the case," said Husain. There had been some prophets in whom their children did not believe just like many other people of their time. Nooh's son, for instance, did not accept his father's prophethood and

drowned together with the disbelievers in the Flood."

Zainab joined the conversation saying:

— **"Prophets must have been rich and respected members of their society. Otherwise no one would listen to them."** Husain said in response to Zainab's remarks:

— "We can find the answer of this question in our prophet's life. Our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was from a respected family, but he was not rich. Some of his opponents used to oppose him saying: "If people had been in need of a prophet, he should have been one of the wealthy people among us." They were unable to understand how the angel of revelation could reveal himself to a poor man. Whereas what would wealth do with a respected task like prophethood?" Abdurrahmon asked:

— **"Do you know how many prophets there were?"**

— "Twenty five prophet names are mentioned in the Qur'an" said Husain. His teacher added:

— "Throughout the history of humanity many people served as prophets. Most of the prophets mentioned in the Qur'an were related to each other. Therefore these prophets lived and fulfilled their mission around the Arabian Peninsula. Undoubtedly there were also prophets sent to the people living in other parts of the world. Our Prophet said that the number of the prophets was around one hundred and twenty thousand." Aisha asked:

— "was the Holy Qur'an sent to all prophets?" Husain smiled:

— “Your question is wrong. The Noble Qur’an is the name of the sacred book sent to our Prophet. Therefore the question should be **“was a book similar to the Noble Qur’an sent to all prophets?”** And my answer to such question would be “no.” We have learned the names of the prophets to whom books were revealed and the titles of these books in the previous chapter about faith in the books of Allah.” When Ali asked:

— **“Christians and Jews did not believe in our Prophet. Would it not be appropriate if we too did not believe in their prophets?”** Husain could not immediately respond to his question. His teacher came to his help:

— “This is the biggest difference between them and Muslims. We believe in their prophets because the Noble Qur’an states the names and lives of Moses and Jesus along with other prophets. It is not an appropriate behavior to argue in this matter. We believe in all of the prophets without making any distinction between them.” Fatima asked:

— **“Which prophet is the greatest one?”** Husain replied:

— “Our Prophet Muhammad is the greatest of them all.” Fatima wanted to learn its reason and asked:

— **“Why is the Prophet Muhammad the greatest of them?”** When Husain realized that he could not answer to this question, he turned to his teacher and asked:

— “Sir! Could you please explain this to us?” Upon this request his teacher said:

— “The greatness of a prophet is evaluated by the greatness of his mission, his actions, and his sufferings.

According to the accounts in the Qur’an, Noah (peace be upon him), for instance, lived 950 years among his people. People used to live very long at that time. Noah delivered Allah’s messages to his people and did everything he could to bring them to the right path; but very few people believed in him. In the end, as you know, those unbelievers were destroyed by a great Flood.

Remember Abraham (peace be upon him). People whom he invited to the path of Allah the Almighty wanted to punish him by fire. But Allah did not let them to do this and turned the fire into a rose garden. Thus He saved Abraham from being burned.

Even though sufferings of Moses, Jesus, and our Prophet Muhammad were beyond imagination, they endured all of these sufferings for the sake of their sacred mission. They patiently endured getting beaten, all kinds of insults, and even getting driven away from their towns.

There are more important reasons for our Prophet Muhammad to be the greatest of the prophets:

He is the last prophet.

His prophethood has been continuing for the last fourteen centuries and it will continue till the Last Day. He is a prophet sent to all of humanity; whereas former prophets had been sent to particular groups of people.

As we learn from his sayings, our Prophet has also been the most beloved servant of Allah the Almighty.

— “But teacher, **there are millions of Christians on earth. When we think about the next generations, Jesus (peace be upon**

him) should be as great as our Prophet" said Mariam.

The teacher replied to her question as follows:

— When a new prophet comes, the mission of the former one ends. This fact repeated throughout history. Even Jesus (peace be upon him) informed us that a new prophet was going to be sent after him. Following Jesus (peace be upon him) is like insisting upon still using candles after the invention of electricity. This situation would also make the prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) very sad.

Zaki raised his hand and asked a different question:

— **"Do we really need prophets? Could people not find the right path if there were not any prophets?"**

His teacher pointed out to Husain and Husain replied this question:

— People could certainly find some truth without prophets. They could comprehend the existence of an Almighty Creator, but they would not be able to know how to worship Him. They would not know that there are angels; that there will be an endless life in the Hereafter; and that they will be questioned concerning what they have done in this world. By means of their reason,

they could figure out some evil actions but not everything that the prophets warn them about.

Since Allah loves us very much, He sent us His messengers to teach us all this information. These messengers also became examples to people by their good manners.

Ruqiyah asked:

— **"I wonder whether it would be more believable if Allah the Almighty had sent his messages by His angels."**

Husain thought for a moment as to how he could answer this odd question. And then he said:

— "We would not know this. If this had been a better way, Allah the Almighty would have certainly done that." His teacher thought Ruqiyah's question needed more explanation so he added:

— "What Husain said is correct. We may also respond to this question as follows: If Allah had sent his commands through His angels, some people would have said:

— "Because we are not able to see the angels, we cannot ask our questions. We cannot speak freely because of our fear from them. It is easy for the angels to say "do not sin" for they cannot commit sins. We wish that it were a human being who had brought these



messages to us. We wonder if he could himself do what he ordered to us."

Those who talked like this could be right about what they said. Because, it is easy to say "do this or do not do that." But it is difficult to practice these orders personally. This is why our Lord Almighty sent His messages through His prophets who fulfilled these orders, abstained from His prohibitions, and became the best examples for their people."

Akif was raising and lowering his hand. It looked like he was hesitating to ask a question. When his teacher saw Akif's hesitation, he asked:

—
"You want to ask something, Akif, don't you?"

— "yes, but ..." said Akif and then stopped speaking.

— "Don't be afraid. Ask whatever you want Akif" said his teacher.

— **"Did the prophets get paid for their job? If they did, from whom did they get their money?"**

The teacher smiled. Akif still had some hesitation. He was embarrassed and wondering if he had asked a meaningless question. Other kids were curiously waiting their teacher's respond. The teacher:

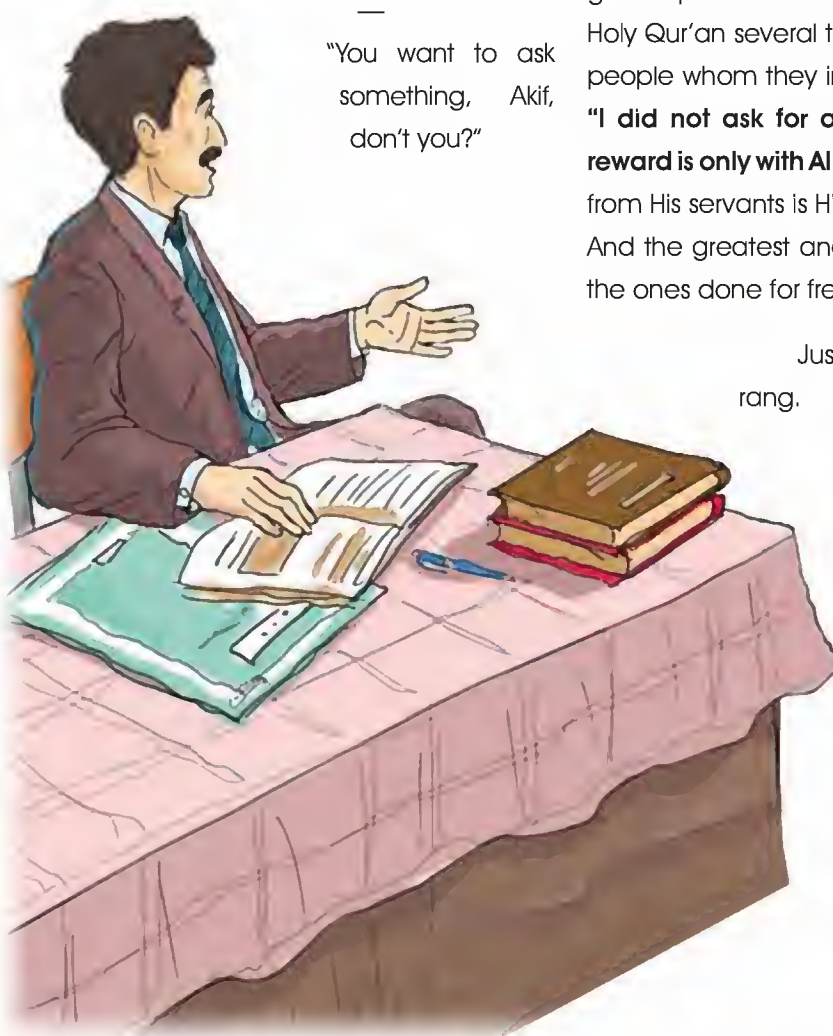
— "Well done, Akif!" You asked a very good question. This question is replied in the Holy Qur'an several times. All prophets told the people whom they invited to the straight path: **"I did not ask for any reward from you; my reward is only with Allah."** Allah's contentedness from His servants is His greatest reward to them. And the greatest and long lasting services are the ones done for free.

Just then the school bell rang.

His teacher thanked Husain for his good job and nice answers. Husain said in return:

— "Actually I would like to thank you, sir. I have learned everything from you. If you didn't help me, I could not manage to prepare this assignment."

M. Yaşar Kandemir



OUR GUIDES

The Bosphorus strait, which resides between the continents of Asia and Europe, owns a unique beauty. Every day hundreds of ships pass through this strait connecting the Black Sea and Marmara Sea. However, since some parts of this strait are too shallow for big ships, it becomes very dangerous to pass it. Especially big cargo oil boats and huge passenger liners which have to be very careful when passing through the Bosphorus strait. This is why captains of such boats request a pilot from the local authorities in order to protect themselves from accidents and running ashore. And they can safely pass the strait with the help of such guides who know the traffic of the strait, the depth, and the conditions of the coasts very well.

The life of this world is like a ship. And we, as humans, are the passengers on this ship coming from the world of the souls to the abode of afterlife. If we were a captain wanting to pass through the Bosphorus strait, we would request a pilot from the local authorities. We also need guides in order to live a nice life in this world, to attain Paradise and to be saved from Hell in the Hereafter. Prophets are such guides sent by Allah the Almighty.

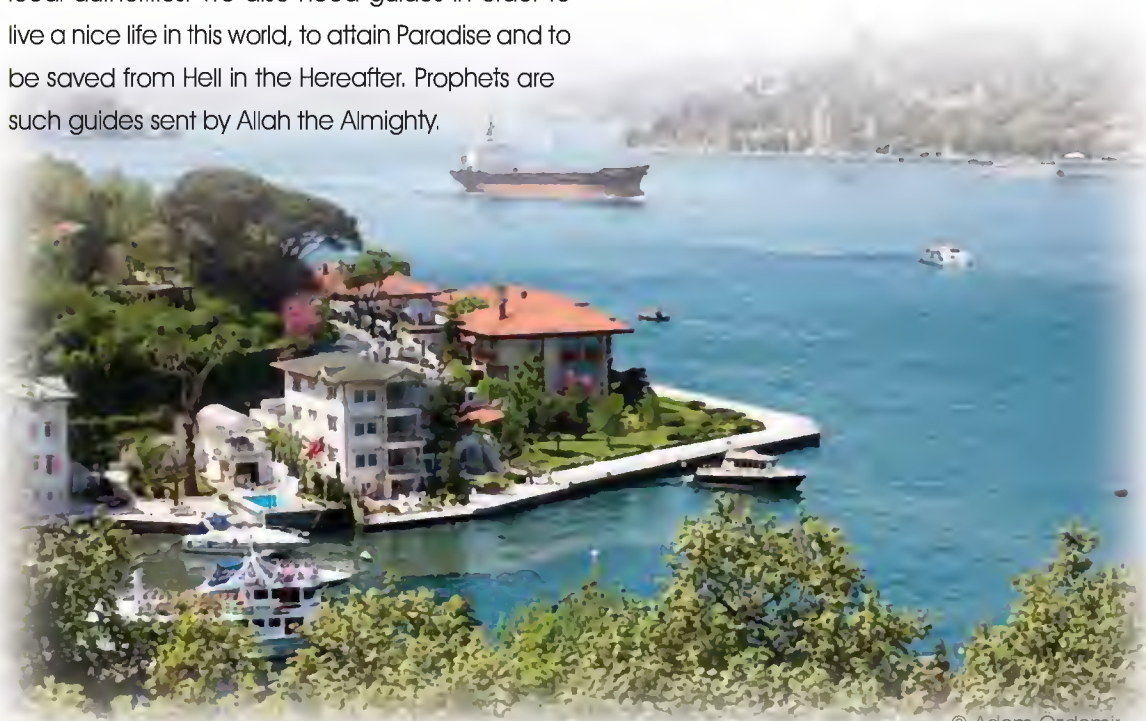


Allah the Exalted says:

"And we made the prophets leaders, guiding men by our command..."

(al-Anbiya 21; 73)

The reason for the creation of human beings is to worship Allah and to achieve His pleasure. Human beings who are being tested in this world have to fight with Satan, with feelings leading to bad behavior such as lying, stinginess, and belligerency. Our Lord Almighty has not left them without guidance in this difficult journey. He has shown them the right path and given them advices to find the truth. He has also chosen some guides among them in order to present them the best living examples.



PROPHETS AND ATTRIBUTES OF THE PROPHETS

Believing in the prophets is one of the six articles of faith. Believing in them is to believe that they were the messengers sent by Allah the Almighty and to accept that all of the messages they have brought are true. Denying the prophets means denying the religion. Because prophets are the ones who brought the religion, taught the Divine books, and delivered the messages that they got from Allah the Almighty.

We call those messengers who are responsible for delivering the commands and prohibitions of Allah to humanity. Our Lord Almighty appointed the first man Adam (peace be upon him) also as the first prophet. Adam conveyed Allah's messages to human beings. In time people forgot Allah and the Hereafter. And they went astray. And thus our Lord sent new messengers to warn them. Between the first prophet Adam and last one Muhammad (peace be upon them) there had been many prophets. In one of the sayings of our Prophet it is stated that 124000 prophets were sent. In the Noble Qur'an only the names of 25 of them are mentioned and Allah the Almighty gives us exemplary information about the lives of these prophets. The names of the prophets mentioned in the Qur'an are:

Adam, Idris (Enoch), Noah, Hud (Eber), Saleh, Abraham, Lot, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Ayyub (Job), Shu'ayb, Aaron, David, Solomon, Elijah, Al-Yasa (Elisha), Yunus (Jonah), Dhu'l-Kifl, Zechariah, John the Baptist, Jesus, and Muhammad (peace be upon them)

Allah the Almighty chose His prophets among human beings. They were like us. They ate, drank, worked, and acquired a profession. They got married and had children. They became sick and died. However, prophets were different than us by receiving revelation. They were special and blessed people chosen by Allah the Almighty to perform a mission. They were responsible to deliver the religion of Allah to humanity and to live in accordance with its principles.

When choosing His messengers, Allah the Almighty equipped them with some superior attributes. Through these attributes they were able to perform their mission in the best way. And they were also able to overcome the problems they faced. All prophets had these attributes. These characteristics, also known as "the attributes of the prophets," are:

Allah the Exalted says:

"(We sent) messengers as the givers of good news and as warners, so that people should not have a plea against Allah after the (coming of) messengers..."

(al-Nisa 4; 165)

Allah the Exalted says:

"...and there never was a people, without a warner having lived among them (in the past)."

(Fatir 35; 21)

Sidq	Attribute of sincerity, truthfulness, and veracity of the prophets in their speech and actions	Prophets never told lies in their lives. Truthfulness is an excellent attribute which is favored by the all of humanity. If one of our friends tells us a lie, we do not believe him/her anymore; but we trust and respect those who speak the truth. Therefore it is impossible to imagine someone who brings messages from God and does not speak the truth but rather tells lies all the time. In general people do not trust and take example from lying people whose words and acts do not match each other.
Amanat	Attribute of the trustworthiness of the prophets	Prophets are "amin" or trustworthy people. Because of this characteristic, people trust them both in their dealings in this world and in matters related to the religion. Because people trust prophets' words and behaviors, they listen to them and try to be like them.
Fatanat	Attribute of prophets' high intelligence and perception	By means of their strong wit, Prophets comprehended the revelation they received quickly. So they could give satisfactory responses to the questions of the people they talked.
Ismat	Attribute of not committing sins	Prophets never committed sins in their entire lives. It can never be thought about them that they associated partners to God, stole drank alcoholic beverages, or fornicated. People usually condemn people who are in such actions and do not take them as examples of their lives.
Tabligh	The Prophets' attribute of delivering all of the commands and prohibitions that they received from Allah to humanity	Every prophet conveyed fully the orders they received to humanity. Even if they faced sufferings and hardships, prophets never held back from fulfilling their mission. Many prophets were threatened by death because they were doing their mission. Some of them, such as Zechariah and John the Baptist, were even martyred.

COMMON MESSAGES OF THE PROPHETS

There are some unchanging and common principles in the messages of the prophets from the first man and the first prophet Adam to the last Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon them). All of the prophets advised people to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Hereafter, and the fate. Truthfulness, benevolence, and helping others are moral

measures accepted by all of humanity since the creation of human beings. Telling lies, deceiving people, gambling, stealing, killing people, and giving damages to the society can be stated among the disapproved behaviors. We can enumerate the main principles under the following headings:



Protecting Religion	Religion is the most important element protecting the existence of a society. And the most significant requirement of a strong religion is to have belief in Allah. This is why all prophets invited their people to believe in the unity of Allah and to worship Him alone. Tawhid or the belief in the unity of Allah has been the common message of all prophets.
Protecting the life	Human life is sacred. Taking an innocent life is a great crime. As it is expressed in the Noble Qur'an "killing a person without a just cause is just like killing all of humanity."
Protecting the intellect	All kinds of foods and drinks which prevent someone to use his/her reason and think clearly are prohibited. This is why alcohol and narcotic drugs are banned in Islam.
Protecting the family	Raising faithful generations with good morals can only be achieved by protecting the family. This is why our religion prohibits all kinds of immoral acts, such as fornication, which causes destruction of families.
Protecting the property	Earning livelihood is accepted as sacred in the messages of the prophets. Property earned by one's own efforts and their right to acquire more is under this sacred protection. Harmful actions and behaviors, such as theft, usurpation, stealing, and bribery, are all banned in Islam.

THE THINGS THAT WE GAIN FROM BELIEVING IN THE PROPHETS

PROPHETS

- introduce us to the concept of Allah the Almighty
- teach us how to worship Allah.
- give us information about our eternal abode or the Hereafter
- become pioneers of the foundation of civilizations
- become the best examples for us by their good morals and behaviors

When we examine the universe, we can see the perfect order it has. We think that such a perfect order cannot come into existence just by coincidence. Thus we reach the conclusion that this universe and all beings in this universe have been created by a Creator. But we do not comprehend who this Creator is and what attributes this Creator has on our own. Our Lord Who knows us better than us have not withhold His help and mercy in this respect. He appointed some of His servants as His messengers. These messengers are our Divine guides and **they are the ones who introduce us to the concept of Allah the Almighty.**

Allah the Exalted says:

"(Abraham said to his people) surely they [idols] are enemies to me, but not (so) the Lord of the worlds; Who created me, then He has shown me the way: And He Who gives me to eat and gives me to drink: And when I am sick, then He heals me; And He Who will cause me to die, then gives me life (again)."

(al-Shuara 26; 77-81)

As a human being, we would like to know why we are in this world; and we would like to recognize ourselves and our Lord Who created us and everything in this universe. We feel the need to beg, pray, supplicate, and worship Him; whereas we cannot determine how to worship Him by ourselves. This is why our Lord appointed His messengers to fulfill this

task. Prophets are the living examples showing us how to worship our Lord. They are the ones who **teach us how to worship Allah the Almighty.**

Our beloved Prophet says:

"Perform the prayer as I do."

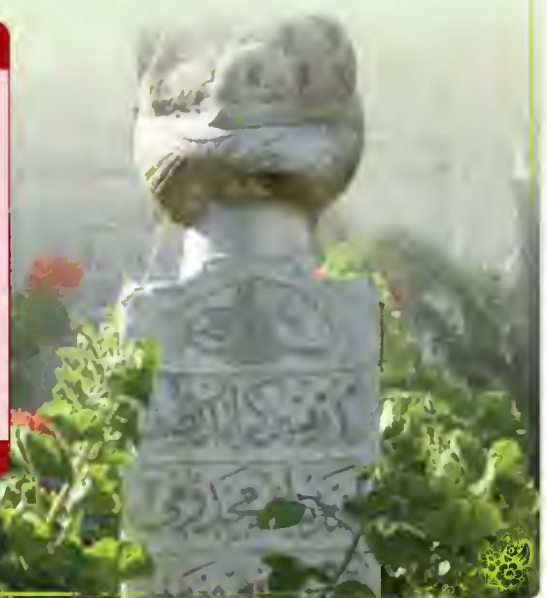
(Bukhari, Ahad, 1)

Sacred books and the prophets are our only source of knowledge about the life after death. Allah the Almighty sends us the information about the Hereafter through His messengers. Prophets give us information about the things that we will face in the Hereafter. They give the good news of rewards waiting for those who believe in Allah and do good deeds. They also warn those who do not believe in Allah and the Hereafter by reminding us of the punishment waiting for them. Prophets are our guides in this world and they **give us information about our eternal abode or the Hereafter.**

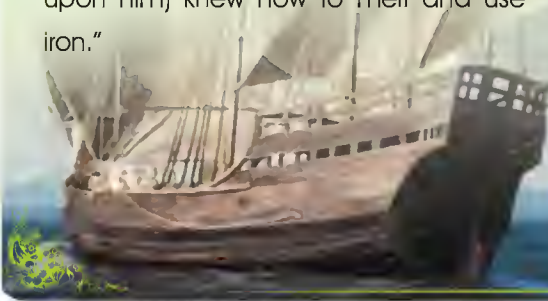
Our beloved Prophet says:

"Your Lord will speak to each one of you without an interpreter. One will look to his right and see his good deeds; and then he will look to his left and see his wrong deeds. And then he will look in front of him and he will see nothing but Hell-fire. And so, any (each one) of you should save himself from the fire even by giving half of a date-fruit (in charity)."

(Bukhari, Zakat, 9)



Prophets were leaders and their leadership was supported by the revelation. And they dealt with art, agriculture, trade, and various other occupations. Thus they made contributions to culture and civilization. They **became pioneers of the foundation of civilizations** in which people have lived in peace and tranquility. They tried to make their followers happy both in this world and in the Hereafter. Among the examples given by the Holy Qur'an are that Noah (peace be upon him) knew how to build ships and David (peace be upon him) knew how to melt and use iron."



Allah the Exalted says:

"... And We made the iron soft for him [David]; Saying: Make ample (coats of mail), and assign a time to the making of coats of mail and do good; ..."

(Saba, 34; 10-11)

Allah the Exalted says:

"[O Noah] Build the ship under Our Eyes and by Our inspiration ..."

(Hud 11; 37)

Our family and environment have a great effect in forming our manners and behaviors. Since our childhood we take our fathers, mothers, teachers, our elders, and our beloved ones as examples in our lives. We get affected by their actions and try to behave like them. Our Lord Almighty has sent His prophets to be our role models. Prophets teach us the truth, justice, honesty, industriousness, mercy, clemency, forgiveness, and compassion. **They have**

become the best examples for us by their good morals and behaviors.

Allah the Exalted says:

"There was indeed in them an excellent example for you to follow ..."

(Mumtahina 60; 6)

THE BEST EXAMPLES FOR US ARE FOUND IN THE LIVES OF THE PROPHETS

Allah the Almighty has presented the lives and good morals of the prophets as the best examples for the entire human beings.

Stories of the prophets stated in the Qur'an are also the evidences of the prophethood of Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him); because he was an ummi prophet (who cannot read and write). It was impossible for someone who cannot read and write to narrate such accurate information about the lives of the prophets who had lived centuries ago. He must have learned this information from a reliable source or it must have been taught to him. This source was Allah the Almighty and His revelation. This fact is expressed in the Qur'an as follows:

"And certainly We sent messengers before you: there are some of them that We have mentioned to you and there are others whom We have not mentioned to you ..." (Mu'min 40; 78)

Now let's briefly see some prophets' exemplary lives mentioned in the Qur'an:

Allah the Exalted says:

"In their [prophets] stories verily there is a lesson for men of understanding...."

(Yusuf 12; 111)

Adam (peace be upon him)

He is the first human being and the first prophet. Allah the Almighty taught him the names of everything and how to talk. Allah the Almighty ordered His angels to prostrate before Adam as a sign of respect. All angels respectfully bowed down before him, but Satan did not obey this order out of jealousy. Satan vowed to make people deviate from the straight path. Allah the Exalted has given him the permission to live till Judgment Day and warned people to be careful about his traps. Adam and his wife Eve were deceived by Satan and ate from the forbidden fruit when they were living in Paradise. And consequently they were sent down to earth. Adam and Eve soon realized their mistake by being deceived with the words of Satan. They immediately repented for their disobedience. They shed tears for many years. Begging for forgiveness they prostrated before Allah the Almighty. Finally Allah the Almighty accepted their repentance and forgave them.

Adam's life is very important to understand the most honorable human being and his value in the presence of Allah. The forgiveness shown to Adam (peace be upon him) by Allah after eating the forbidden fruit is a sign of Allah's mercy to His servants. In this way our Lord Almighty has taught human beings how to repent.

Adam (peace be upon him) is the best example for us to repent for our sins and ask forgiveness from Allah.

Noah (peace be upon him)

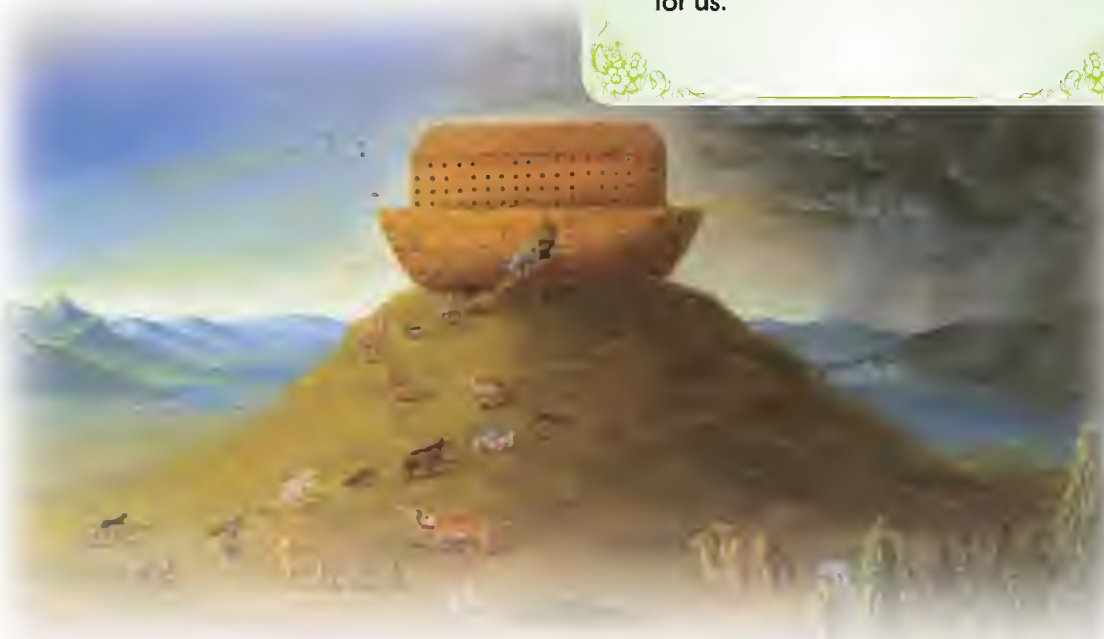
Noah (peace be upon him) is one of the prophets appointed by Allah as a guide to show the right path to humanity. People of Noah (peace be upon him) had deviated from the path shown by the earlier prophets. Strong people had been oppressing the weak ones. People had begun to worship the idols made by their own hands. Noah invited them back to faith in the unity of Allah. He tried everything to show his people the right path and to make them worship Allah. His people insulted and mocked him, but he never held back from performing his mission. He tried to teach people the religion of Allah for 950 years. Day and night he preached to people about the truth. He tried every possible way to show people the right path, but less than a hundred people believed in him.

Unbelievers had many discussions with him. They did everything to torture him. When Noah (peace be upon him) frightened them by the punishment of Allah, they ridiculed him saying: "O Noah! Now bring upon us what you have

threatened us with, if you have spoken the truth."

Noah was very sad for what his people were doing. In the end Allah the Almighty ordered him to build a ship and get those who believed in him and one couple from each animal species onto the ship. Then it began to rain for months. Water covered the entire world. Noah and the people believed in him were saved from the Flood by getting on the Ark; while those who did not believe in him and mocked him by saying "bring upon us what you have threatened us with" were drowned in the Flood. After the rain stopped, Noah's Ark rested upon the Mount Judi. Noah (peace be upon him) and those who were with him safely got off the ship. These people and the other animals spread around the world and began to procreate. This is why Noah (peace be upon him) is called the "second father of humanity."

Noah's efforts and patience on the path of truth is a good example for us.



Abraham (peace be upon him)

Prophet Abraham is a great prophet called by Allah as "*Khalil* or friend." At the very early ages Abraham began to preach to people about the existence and oneness of Allah. People of Babylon beginning with his father Azar, however, did not believe in him. Even though his father insulted and drove him away, he treated his father nicely.

Abraham fought with Nimrod the king of his time. Trusting his wealth and sovereignty Nimrod had declared himself as god. He was torturing those who did not accept his claims. Abraham (peace be upon him) invited Nimrod to the true religion. He tried to convince Nimrod to give up his claims of being a god. He asked Nimrod to believe in Allah Who creates everything from nothingness, kills everything and then gives their life back. Nimrod claimed that he could do the

some. Then he called two men and had one of them killed and freed the other one. "Look! I kill and give life" said he. This time Abraham told him:

- "Allah makes the sun rise from the East, why don't you make it rise from the West?" Nimrod was astonished upon this question.

It was a festival day. People had gone for festival events. Abraham knew that this was his chance, so he went into the house of idols. He broke all idols into pieces except the biggest one. Then he hung his ax on its shoulder.

When people came back from the festival, they became very upset to see what had happened in the house of their idols. They remembered Abraham and what he had told them about their idols. So they called Abraham and asked:



- "O Abraham! Are you the one who did this to our gods?" Abraham (peace be upon him) replied:

- "Maybe this big one did this to the others. Ask it if it can talk." People had to profess that idols were lifeless beings and they were unable to talk. Thereupon Abraham reminded them the faith in oneness of Allah saying:

- "Then why do you turn away from the one and only God and worship these idols that may give neither benefit nor harm to you? Shame on you and shame on those which you worship! Aren't you going to come to your senses?"

Even though idol worshippers had no response to give this reasonable question, they did not abandon their wrong path. They decided to throw and burn Abraham in fire.

A big bonfire got prepared. Abraham (peace be upon him) was thrown into it through a catapult. However Allah the Owner of everything commanded the fire saying: "*O fire, be coolness and peace for Abraham.*" (al-Anbiya 21; 69) The Fire obeyed this order and did not burn Abraham. People were amazed by seeing that the fire had not burned him.

After this incident, Abraham left Babylon and went to Egypt and Jerusalem. He settled in Jerusalem with his wife Sarah. He had his other wife Hagar and his son Ishmael settle in the valley of Mecca. Then together with his son Ishmael he built Qa'bah in Mecca. Unity (oneness of Allah or tawhid) was the basis of the religion brought by Abraham (peace be upon him).

Abraham (peace be upon him) is a good example for us as far as examining the perfect order of the universe and then perceiving the existence of Allah.

Joseph (peace be upon him)

Joseph was one of the sons of Jacob (peace be upon them). He was a very handsome and intelligent boy. When he was a kid, his brothers were jealous of him and threw him into a well in the desert. Then they lied to their father, saying "Joseph had been eaten by a wolf." A caravan pulling water out of the well found Joseph, took him to the palace of Egypt's ruler and sold him as a slave. He was slandered in the palace and innocently sent to prison. Joseph (peace be upon him) stayed in prison during the best years of his youth.



Allah the Almighty bestowed upon Joseph the ability to interpret dreams. He was interpreting his prison-mates' dreams and inviting them to believe in the oneness of Allah and the Hereafter. One night the ruler of Egypt saw an interesting dream. Nobody could interpret his dream. An ex-cellmate of Joseph told the ruler of Egypt that Joseph (peace be upon him) might be able to interpret his dream. Prophet Joseph (peace be upon him) interpreted the ruler's dream very well. He said that there was going to be a great famine in the future, but people could survive through it with the help of some precautions. The ruler liked this interpretation. Just then he learned that Joseph was innocently sent to prison. So he got Joseph out of the prison and gave him the responsibility of his treasures.

Joseph (peace be upon him) recognized his brothers who came to Egypt to take some wheat during the years of famine. He invited his parents and brothers to Egypt to live with him. He showed the greatness of forgiveness and kindness.

Prophet Joseph's life story is the best narrative in the Qur'an. The chapter about Joseph (12) deals with some emotional states such as separation and union which every human being may experience in their lives. It also talks about how jealousy can lead people to evil. The ill results of slandering are also expressed in that chapter.

Prophet Joseph is a nice example for us about forgiving those who harm us and responding to evil with kindness.

Moses (peace be upon him)

Moses (peace be upon him) is among the prophets sent by Allah the Almighty to the sons of Israel.

The sons of Israel, who come from the Prophet Jacob's lineage, had settled down in Egypt during the time of Prophet Joseph. In time they had lost their reputation in Egypt and begun to be treated like slaves.

Egyptian rulers used to be called as pharaohs. The pharaoh who ruled Egypt at the time when Moses was born passed a cruel period. He decreed that all the sons born to an Israelite parent would be put to death. Allah the Almighty commanded Moses' mother to place her baby into a basket and cast it into the Nile. Allah informed her that her son was going to be raised in the palace and become a prophet in the future. Thus Moses' mother put him in a basket and cast it into the river. Pharaoh's wife found the basket and took it to the palace. Thus Pharaoh was going to raise the person who was going to stand in front of his wrong deeds and preach to him about Allah in his own palace.

Moses' childhood passed in the palace. During his adolescence, he left Egypt for a while, went and lived with the prophet Jethro in Madyan. On his way back to Egypt, with his wife and family, he received the first revelations from Allah on the Mount Sinai. Thus he was chosen as a prophet and bestowed various miracles. He was also commanded to perform his prayers and invite Pharaoh to the right path. His brother Aaron was appointed as his assistant.

Moses, together with his brother Aaron (peace be upon them), stood against the cruel Pharaoh and told him about Allah and His orders. Pharaoh was an arrogant and snooty person.



He thought that he owned all the power and revolted against Allah. Moses showed some miracles to make him believe; but Pharaoh did not believe in these miracles saying they were acts of sorcery. Then he asked him to compete with his magicians. Moses (peace be upon him) accepted this offer. Pharaoh's magicians threw their ropes and staffs on the ground. They deceived their audience and their ropes and staffs appeared like serpents. Moses threw his staff on the ground, too. And it turned into a bigger serpent which swallowed all the other serpents. The magicians were wanderstruck and at once prostrated themselves, declaring that they believed in Allah. Pharaoh threatened them, but they did not turn back from their faith. They were martyred by having their hands and feet cut off on alternate sides.

When the sons of Israel realized that Pharaoh was planning to kill Moses and all of his believers, they left Egypt under the leadership of Moses (peace be upon him). Moses and the sons of Israel were stuck between the Red Sea in front

of them and Pharaoh's army behind them. Allah the Almighty created a miracle and split the Sea in two and opened a path for the believers to pass. After the believers had passed through the path, Pharaoh and his men attempted to pursue them along the same path. As soon as Pharaoh and his men set foot on the path, however, it vanished, and they were drowned in the Sea.

Moses (peace be upon him) fought against Pharaoh and the sons of Israel were able to escape from Pharaoh's tortures/ Moses spent the rest of his life by teaching the Torah and its principles to the sons of Israel.

The life of Moses (peace be upon him) is a nice example for us to learn how to fight with oppressive and ungrateful people.

Jesus (peace be upon him)

Jesus' mother Mary was a member of the family of Imran who were presented to humanity as an example by Allah the Almighty. Imran's wife Hannah dedicated the baby she had been expecting to the path of Allah. When her baby was born, Hannah named her Mary. Then she kept her promise and gave her daughter to the service of al-Aqsa mosque. Mary was raised as a chaste woman under the care of her aunt's husband Zachariah.

Mary used to spend her time by worshipping in a chamber reserved for her in al-Aqsa mosque and by taking care of the sanitation of the mosque. One day Gabriel came to Mary and told her that Allah the Almighty was going to give her a boy. Mary expressed her chastity and asked how such a thing could be possible since she was a virgin. Gabriel told her that whenever Allah wishes something it happens instantly. Thus Jesus (peace be upon him) was born miraculously without a father.

The sons of Israel did not believe the virgin birth of Jesus and reproached Mary saying "she did something to be ashamed." Thereupon our mother Mary pointed at her newborn son and asked people to talk to him. No sooner did the sons of Israel say that babies could not talk than another miracle happened and the baby began to talk:

"He said: Surely I am a servant of Allah; He has given me the Book and made me a prophet; And He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and He has enjoined on me prayer and paar-rate sa lang as I live; And dutiful to my mother, and He has not made me insolent, unblessed; And peace on me on the day I was born, and on the day I die, and on the day I am raised to life. Such was Jesus, son of Mary, (this is) a statement of the truth concerning which

they doubt. It befits not (the Majesty of) Allah that He should take unto Himself a son. Glary be to Him! When He decrees a thing, He says unto it only: Be! And it is. And surely Allah is my Lord and your Lord, therefore serve Him; this is the right path." (Maryam 19: 30-36)

Just like Allah the Almighty created Adam without a father and mother, He created Jesus without a father. At the age of thirty, Jesus (peace be upon him) was given the mission of prophethood and various miracles. But still only a few people, called hawaris or disciples, believed in him.

Jews wanted to prevent Jesus and his disciples from conveying their message; so they decided to kill him. Allah the Almighty, however, saved him from them. Jews caught and crucified someone who looked like Jesus (peace be upon him). Then they said that they killed Jesus son of Mary; whereas they had not killed Jesus but some other man. Allah the Almighty had raised him up to the heavens.

There are many good examples for us in Jesus' good manners, his mercy, his eagerness to spread friendship among people and to purify the souls.



Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)

Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) is the last one of the messengers of Allah. Our Lord Almighty states that he is the final prophet saying in surat Ahzab (33) verse 40: **"...but he is the messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets..."**

Before Muhammad (peace be upon him) was appointed as a Messenger of Allah, people had deviated from the right path. Morality had degenerated. Oppression and injustice had been widespread. The strong had been tyrannizing over the weak. People had been addicted to alcoholic beverages and gambling. Stealing and usurping others' rights had become routine actions. Humanity had been waiting for a leader to show them what is good and evil, to pull them out of the darkness, and to enlighten them. It was then that Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was sent as a prophet to humanity.

Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was born in Mecca in 571. His mother's name was Aminah and his father's name was Abdullah. His father had passed away before he was born. Our Prophet was sent to a wet nurse named Halima soon after he was born. He had very happy days with Halimah. When he was seven years old, his mother Aminah passed away. After his mother's death, our beloved Prophet began to stay with his grandfather Abdulmuttalib. When he died two years later, his uncle Abu Talib took his care. Our Prophet's childhood years passed with his uncle. Our Prophet was helping his uncle in his daily duties. He even shepherded his uncle's animals. He was different than other children. He never told lies; nor worshipped idols. He always ran

Allah the Exalted says:

"And We have not sent you (O Muhammad) save as a bringer of good tidings and a warner unto all mankind..."

(Saba' 34; 28)

to help others. He won everybody's trust. This was why an angel named him as "Muhammad al-Amin or Muhammad the trustworthy."

Our Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) did business with his uncle Abu Talib during his adolescence. When he reached the age of twenty five, he married Khadijah.

When our beloved Prophet reached the age of forty, he began to frequently retire in a cave called Hira near Mecca. One day in the month of Ramadan when he was in the cave of Hira, Archangel Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to him and informed him that he was chosen as a messenger of Allah. Our Prophet told everything to his wife Khadijah. She immediately believed in him. After that Khadijah, Ali, Abu Bokr, and Zaid (may Allah be pleased with them) became Muslims.

Then our Prophet invited the Meccans to Islam. Although some of them believed in him, most of them did not. They even began to torture the believers. Allah's Messenger and those that believed in him showed patience in the face of all kinds of tortures. The Prophet's mission in Mecca continued for thirteen years.

In order to live in accordance with Islam and to convey its message, our Prophet and his believers migrated to Medina in 622.

Our Prophet stayed in Medina for ten years. In these years believers built a mosque in Medina. The Prophet (peace be upon him) declared a state of brotherhood between Medinan believers (Ansar or helpers) and Meccan migrants (muhajirun). Qur'anic verses related to social life were revealed during this period. Similarly many acts of worship, such as almsgiving, fasting, and pilgrimage, were declared obligatory during this period.

Our Prophet (peace be upon him) sent messengers to the rulers of neighboring countries and invited them to Islam. In 630, he conquered Mecca and destroyed all the idols in the Ka'bah. Islam spread all around Arabian Peninsula. In 632 he performed the farewell pilgrimage and gave his famous speech consisting of very important messages to humanity. In the same year, when he was sixty three years old, he passed away in Medina.

Our beloved Prophet is the most eminent servant of Allah the Almighty. Our Lord Almighty praised his morals and commanded us in the Qur'an to take him as an example in every aspect of our lives saying: *"Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the latter day and remembers Allah much."* (Ahzab 33; 21)



Our beloved Prophet is an exemplary person who combines in himself the good morals and behaviors of all of the prophets.

O Lord! The Creator of all creation on earth and in heavens! You have chosen prophets among human beings and sent them to us as examples. We have opened our hands to You and we are begging You! Dear Lord! Bestow upon us the happiness to be servants like

Adam

Idris (Enoch)

Noah

Hud (Eber)

Saleh

Lut (Lot)

Abraham

Ishmael

Ishaq (Isaac)

Ya'qub (Jacob)

Yusuf (Joseph)

Shu'ayb

Moses

Aaron

David

**Sulaiman
(Solomon)**

Ayyub (Job)

Dhu'l kifl

Yunus (Jonah)

Ilyas (Elijah)

Al-yasa (Elijah)

Zachariah

**Yahya (John the
Baptist)**

Jesus

Muhammad

Peace be upon him

who sincerely repented of his sins

who has been made to ascend to a high level

who did everything to convey your religion

who stood by the oppressed and needy against the oppressors

who visited the sick and took care of the poor and the needy

who tried to prevent immorality

who sincerely obeyed Your orders

who showed the courage to give his life for Your sake

who showed people the straight path

who did not give up his hope in You

who was chaste

who was trustworthy

who did not hesitate to tell the truth to the oppressors and ungrateful

who helped the followers of the right path

who was eager to worship You

who spent all his possession on Your path

who was patient

who was remembered among the good people in Your presence

who remembered You in both wealth and poverty

who remembered You with goodness

who was among the righteous

who prayed to You sincerely

who became a martyr on Your path

who purified his soul from evil

who beautified his morality with the morals of the Qur'an

OUR PROPHET IN REVALATION TO THE OTHER PROPHETS

Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him) is the final prophet sent to humanity. While earlier prophets were sent to specific people or nations of their time, **our Prophet has been sent to the all of humanity including those to come till the Last Day.** This is why our Prophet sent letters and messengers to some countries and regions in his life time to convey the message of Islam. For instance he invited the rulers of the two powerful empires of the day, Persia and Byzantium. He asked them to convert to Islam together with their people. Today conveying his sacred message to the entire world and

delivering it to people is the responsibility of his followers.

The prophets chosen by Allah the Almighty worked hard for the happiness of the people. Saying that "our reward is given only by Alloh" **they did not ask any compensation from anybody for their mission.** Our beloved prophet, too, perfectly fulfilled his mission and exactly lived according to the life style ordered in the Noble Qur'an. He showed the utmost effort and made all kinds of sacrifices for the sake of his mission. And he founded a peaceful



and exemplary society in the light of the verses of the Qur'an.

It is the mission of the prophets to invite people to Allah and to show them the straight path. We read the lives of the prophets and what they did for humanity from the Noble Qur'an. And we also learn timeless truths and good manners. All prophets are messengers coming from the same source and inviting to the same message. Our beloved prophet expressed that "all prophets come from the same source; their religion is the same religion, and their relation to each other is like the siblings of the same mother." This is why all messengers of Allah, from Adam to Muhammad (peace be upon them), verified and supported each other's message. No prophet contradicted other prophets. Our beloved prophet explains by means of the following example how all prophets verified each other's message:

"My similitude in comparison with the other prophets before me, is that of a man who has built a house nicely and beautifully, except for a place of one brick in a corner. The people go about it and wonder at its beauty, but say: 'Would it not be better if this brick be put in its place?' So I am that brick, and I am the last of the Prophets." (Bukhari, Manaqib, 18)

Our beloved prophet would remember the earlier prophets with love and respect.

When he mentioned their names, he would add expressions of "prophet of Allah" or "my brother." For instance once when he was talking about Moses, he started his words saying "my brother Moses." On his way back from Taif, he asked the Christian slave Addas where he was from. When he responded that he was from Ninova (Mosul), the Prophet told Addas "are you from my brother Jonah's town?" and then he

Allah the Exalted says:

"Say: Obey Allah and obey the messenger. But if you turn away, he is only responsible for the duty placed on him and your responsibility is what placed on you. If you obey him, you are on the right way. But the messenger has no other responsibility than to convey (the message), plainly."

(Nur 24; 54)

complemented Addas and invited him to believe in the unity of Allah. Addas responded his invitation affirmatively and converted to Islam.

Our beloved Prophet would give examples from the lives of earlier prophets.

He encouraged his ummah to follow these examples and to live a pure life like the prophets had. For instance he gave Prophet David as an example, who had earned his life by manual labor, and expressed that **"the best earning is the one that one earns by his own hands."** The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) advised those who would like to fast more than the month of Ramadan to fast like David (peace be upon him); for he used to fast on the alternate days.

Our beloved Prophet used to narrate to his companions the interesting stories experienced by the earlier prophets. He asked people to derive lessons from the prophets' lives and the treatment of the people whom they invited to accept their message. **Our prophet would also talk about the sufferings and the hardships that**

the prophets experienced during their mission and present their patience and struggle as examples.

In this way he would console the believers who were being oppressed because of their faith. Facing all kinds of sufferings and hardships, our beloved prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) himself also got consoled by remembering what had happened to the earlier prophets. While distributing the war booty after the battle of Hunain, some people complained and told the Prophet to be fair. These words hurt the prophet's feelings very much and he said: "If I were not a just person, who could be considered just?" Then he consoled himself saying that "may Allah show mercy to Moses. Even though he faced worse maltreatments than this, he still maintained his patience.

Our beloved prophet also stated that the prophets' mission has been to work for the salvation of humanity. **He expressed the significance of obeying the prophets and following the divine commands that were brought by them.** He once compared the prophets to a man who brought an important message to his people saying:

"My example and the example of Islam that I have been sent with is that of a man who came to some people and said,

— O people! I have seen the enemy's army with my own eyes, and I am a naked warner; so protect yourselves and save your lives."

Then a group of his people obeyed him and fled at night proceeding stealthily till they were safe, while another group of them disbelieved him and stayed at their places till morning when the army came upon them, and killed and ruined them completely.

So this is the example of that person who obeys me and follows what I have brought (the Quran and the Sunna), and the example of the one who disobeys me and disbelieves the truth that I have brought." (Bukhari, I'tisam, 2)

Our beloved prophet makes the following comparison in order to explain that the prophets work for the good of humanity:

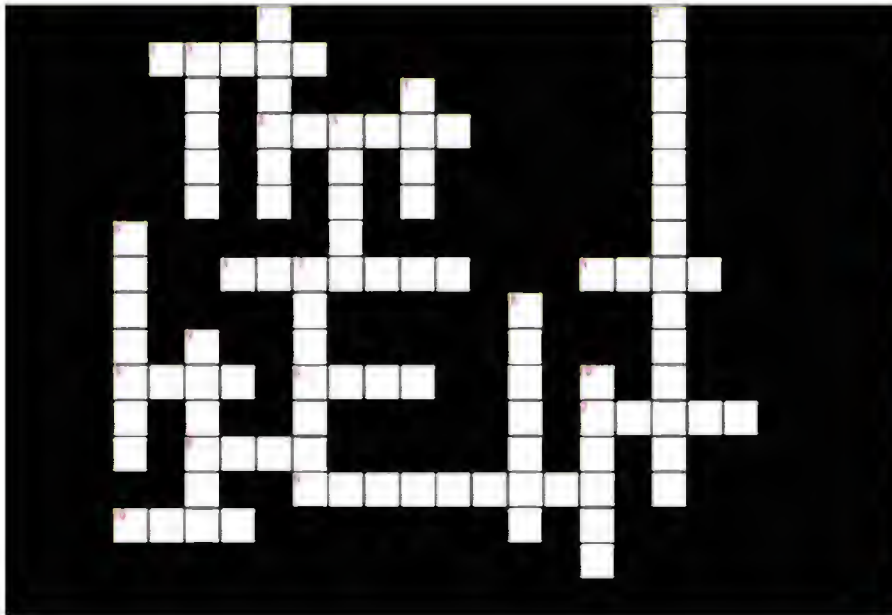
"My example and your example is that of a person who lit the fire and when insects and moths began to fall in it, he would be making efforts to keep them out. And I am holding you from your belts to keep you back from the fire, but you are trying to escape from my hands and go into the fire." (Muslim,

Fada'il, 19)



QUESTIONS

Crossword Puzzle



Across

1. The term used for the being that was expelled from the Paradise and Allah's Mercy since he did not bowed down before Adam
2. The Arabic term used for the trustworthiness of the Prophets
3. The Arabic term used for ancient Egyptian Kings
4. The Arabic term used for Prophets' righteousness in their words and actions
5. The name of the Prophet who saved Humans from the Flood and is accepted as "the second father of humanity"
6. The name of the first human being and the first Prophet
7. The Arabic term used for the sinlessness of the Prophets
8. The name of the cave where the first revelation came to the Prophet (PBUH)
9. The Arabic term used for people who were given the responsibility to take Allah's messages to the humanity
10. The name of the mountain on which Prophet Nooh's ark grounded after the Flood

Down

01. The term used for the early believers of Prophet Jesus
02. The nickname given to the Prophet Muhammad by Meccans because of his honesty and trustworthiness
03. The name of the Prophet who has become an example to entire the humanity by his patience
04. The Name of Jesus' Mother
05. The Arabic term used for the Medinan Muslims who helped Meccan immigrants
06. The Arabic term used for Prophets' high intelligence and deep cognizance
07. The name of the Prophet who was called by Allah as "His friend (Khallullah)"
08. The Arabic term used for the Prophets' attribute to take Allah's messages to the humanity
09. The Arabic term used for the unity of Allah and the common message of His Messengers
10. The name of the king who lived during the time of Prophet Abraham and claimed himself as god because of his enormous wealth and power

Find the Correct Match

1	Denying the prophets	the unity of Allah and to worship Him alone.
2	Prophets were responsible to deliver the religion of Allah to humanity	the earlier prophets with love and respect.
3	Even if they faced all kinds of sufferings and hardships,	is a sign of Allah's mercy to His servants.
4	All prophets invited their people to believe in	about forgiving those who harm us and responding evil with kindness.
5	Our Lord Almighty has sent His prophets	and to live in accordance with its principles.
6	Forgiving Adam after eating the forbidden fruit	to be our role models.
7	Our beloved prophet would remember	prophets never held back from fulfilling their mission.
8	Prophet Joseph is a nice example for us	means denying the religion.

Let's Test Ourselves

1. What do we call a person who receives revelation from Allah, delivers the commands and prohibitions to humanity, and invites people to the straight path?

- A) Teacher
- B) Scholar
- C) Prophet
- D) Friend of Allah

2. What does "sidq" mean?

- A) Sincerity, truthfulness, and veracity of the prophets
- B) Not to commit any sin
- C) To be intelligent and perceptive
- D) To be trustworthy

3. What is the greatest miracle of the Prophet Muhammad?

- A) The incident of Isra (the night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem)
- B) The Noble Qur'an
- C) Splitting the moon in half
- D) The incident of Mi'raj (ascension to heavens)

5. What do we call the extraordinary actions of the prophets which they showed to prove their prophethood?

- A) Miracle
- B) Magic
- C) Wonder
- D) Prophecy

4. Which attribute is about the prophets' intelligence and perception?

- A) Amanat
- B) Fatanat
- C) Ismat
- D) Sidaq

Let's fill in the blanks with the given words:

(Prayer, follow, leaders, good news, a lesson, an excellent example, a plea, understanding, our command, I do)

1. "And we made the prophets, guiding men by" (al-Anbiya 21; 73)
2. "(We sent) messengers as the givers of and as warners, so that people should not haveagainst Allah after the (coming of) messengers" (al-Nisa 4; 165)
3. "There was indeed in them for you to....." (Mumtahina 60; 6)
4. "In their [prophets] stories verily there isfor men of" (Yusuf 12; 111)
5. "Perform the as" (Bukhari, Ahad, 1)

Allah the Exalted says:

“(We sent) messengers as the givers
of good news and as warners, so
that people should not have a plea
against Allah after the (coming of)
messengers...”

(al-Nisa 4; 165)





THE SEASON OF MERCY AND WORSHIP:



RAMADAN and FASTING



- ❁ *The virtue of the month of Ramadan*
- ❁ *Terms related to Ramadan and fasting*
- ❁ *The benefits of fasting*
- ❁ *Types of Fasting*
- ❁ *Rulings related to Fasting*
- ❁ *Tarawih, Itikaf, The Night of Power (laylat al-Qadr) and Eid al-Fitr*
- ❁ *Our Prophet's Life in the Month of Ramadan*



THE FIRST FAST

Burak and his father were extremely tired. Carrying the packets that they had bought from the market for fast breaking made them really tired. After taking the packages to the kitchen, Burak and his father hardly made it to the couch. The shopping, which they started in the morning, had lasted until the late afternoon. There was everything that one can look for on the stands of the lighted market. Delicious honeys, several kinds of olives that whet the customers' appetites, cheeses, pastramis, and pepperonis... Burak turned most of his attention to the chocolates and bought a few different kinds to eat at fast breaking.

Burak's mother also had started to get ready for Ramadan several days ago. The detailed house cleaning, home-made desserts, fruit punches, and phyllo doughs... Everything was ready for the month of Ramadan that will start tomorrow.

Burak was ten years old now. He was going to perform his first fast tomorrow. In previous Ramadans, he was performing a "boat fasting." This was the fasting of children. It lasted from pre-dawn meal to lunch, and with the support of the lunch, reached to fast-breaking in the

evening. Since Burak was old enough, he was going to perform fasting as grown-ups do.

His father said to Burak:

- Son, tonight the first Tarawih Prayer will be performed. If you want to, you can come with me to the mosque, but you first have to finish your homework until the evening. And Burak answered:

— Okay father, I will finish it quickly.

After dinner, Burak and his father went to the mosque. Burak felt more like a grown-up when he put on the white handmade praying-cap that his mother took out of the chest just for him. They listened to the sermon before they performed the prayer. After the call to prayer (odhan), the prayer started. He performed the long Tarawih Prayer with joy. He joined in the congregation, loudly reciting the Salatu Salams (reciting peace and blessing on the prophet) that are raised in between the prayers. When they returned home, it was already time for Burak to go to bed. As he was going to bed, he kept insisting:

— Mother, wake me up for the Sahur (pre-dawn meal) too. He was even saying that if he cannot wake up, they could



splash his face with water. His mother sent him to bed by saying:

— Don't worry son, I will wake you up.

Burak went to sleep as soon as he put his head down. Shortly before dawn, his mother's soft hands were caressing his cheeks and she was saying to him:

— Wake up big boy, the sahur time is almost gone. Burak, who went to the bathroom half-awake, woke up with the cold water that he splashed his face with. He sat at the table that his mother had prepared. His mother had surprised Burak for his first sahur by making the pastry he loved most. He hugged his mother and thanked her saying:

— Dear mother, I can finish this whole thing by myself.

In order not to get too hungry during the day, Burak had a good meal. His father warned him:

— Son, don't forget to drink some water, soon it will be time for the Call to Morning Prayer (Salat al-Fajr). As you know, until this evening, there is no eating or drinking." He drank a few glasses of water not to be thirsty during the day. Then he brushed his teeth and made intention (al-niyah) to fast, listened to his father who was reciting the Noble Quran in the living room. After performing the Morning Prayer (Salat al-Fajr), he went back to sleep to have some more rest.

When Burak woke up, he went to kitchen to drink water. He was about to drink the water when he remembered that he was fasting. He looked at the time. It was almost ten. He started to think how he was going to stay without drinking water until the iftar (fast-breaking dinner at sunset.) First, he thought of quitting. A voice in him said that he was old enough now and should not quit. Burak made a decision; no matter how hard it will be, he would keep the promise he made to Allah. Waking up for sahur meant that he promised Allah that he would fast today.

In order to fill his time, he had to find something that would keep him busy. First, he played with his toys for a while. However, his lips were parched and his eyes kept drifting to the water bottle on the table. Towards the

afternoon, there was also hunger besides being thirsty. Towards the evening, he went next to his mom who was preparing food for the fast-breaking dinner. His mom teased him when she saw that he sat at the kitchen table so silently:

— What happened my child? It looks like fasting knocked you down, Burak!

— Do you know mom, I even envy the water of Mavish (the pet bird) in the cage. Now, I would even eat the leek that you were trying to make me eat running around with a spoon in your hand.

- My dear son, see what one day of fasting has made you think! The situation of the poor who do not have a piece of bread to eat, the value of a piece of bread and some water to drink, how generous the Creator Who provided all these offerings to our tables is... Come and help me set the table. Let's get ready before your dad comes.

Burak was carrying the dinner plates that he did not care about until today with care as if they are precious treasures and setting them on the table with care.

As the fast-breaking time was approaching, the whole family sat at the table and waited. His father said smiling:

— Good job Burak! You have completed your first fast successfully. I am buying your fasting, he said in jest, and put some money into Burak's pocket—one week's worth of allowance.

Even before his fasting was finished, Burak had received a present. The food that he would eat yesterday without thinking was within his arm's reach now. In spite of his hunger and no one's prevention, he was waiting for our Creator's permission.

The time that everyone had been waiting for was announced to the city with the lights of the minarets and calls to prayer. Burak broke his first fast and was so happy. He was experiencing the joy of passing the hard exam and keeping the promise that he gave to Allah.

Hasan Tahsin KARAMAN (Abbreviated)



The Noble Quran began to be revealed in Ramadan.

Ramadan is the month in which we fast during the day and perform the Tarawih Prayer at night.

Our good deeds and worship performed in Ramadan are rewarded more.

The night of qadr, (laylat al-qadr) that is valued more than a thousand months is in Ramadan.

YA SEHRI
RAMAZAN
RAMADAN:
SULTAN OF THE ELEVEN
MONTHS

Ramadan is the month that our livelihood gets blessed.


Ramadan is a month of patience. The reward of patience is Paradise.

There is mercy in the beginning of Ramadan, forgiveness of sins in the middle, and salvation from hellfire at the end.

Ramadan is the month of helping each other.

IMAN
ALLAHADIR

WHAT IS FASTING?

 **Fasting**, means to abstain from eating, drinking, and sexual intercourse from dawn till sunset.



Allah the Exalted says:

"O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that you may (learn) self-restraint."

[al-Baqara 2: 183]

Upon whom fasting is obligatory?

It is obligatory




to fast during
the month of
Ramadan

for every
Muslim

* who is sane, has reached
puberty
* and is healthy enough to fast

71

 Even though fasting is not obligatory upon children, it is appropriate to let them fast as long as it does not give any harm to their health. This way, they would get accustomed to fasting and share a happiness with their elders.



What are the necessary conditions for our fast to be valid?

For our fasting
to be valid,

* making intention
* and abstaining from everything that breaks
fasting from dawn to sunset.

are required



SOME TERMS RELATED TO RAMADAN



When and how do we make intention for fasting?

We make intention to fast before dawn saying; "I intend to fast for the coming day of Ramadan for the sake of Allah."



What happens if one forgets to make intention at night for the supererogatory fasting?



It is not required to make intention for a supererogatory fasting before dawn. Intention can be made about 45 minutes before the time of noon prayer.



Do we actually have to say the intention?

No, it is sufficient to intend by heart. Waking up to eat or sokhur, deciding to fast from the night before, or knowing that one will be fasting the whole day are all considered to constitute intention. However, it is better if we pronounce our intention.



What is **imsak**?



Imsak means "holding off" and refers to the time the fast begins, which is just before the dawn about to rise. This time is also the beginning time of the dawn prayer.



What is **Sokhur**?

The time before imsak is called sokhur. The meal that is eaten at that time is called "the sokhur meal."



What happens if one forgets to make intention before dawn for the Ramadan fast?



If we make intention to fast after dawn, both our intention and fast become invalid.





Do we need to repeat our intention every Ramadan night? Can we fast the entire month of Ramadan with one intention made at its beginning?

One must make the intention to fast for each day one fasts before dawn. One intention for the entire month is not sufficient.



❁ The time of sahur is a time that the supplications are accepted. The sahur food gives us energy and endurance to fast. Our beloved Prophet advised us to have a sahur meal and said "Eat at sahur since there is abundance and fruitfulness in a sahur meal." (Bukhari, Sawm, 20)

Sahur is a sacred period of time during which those who love Allah pass their time with worship, supplication, and remembrance of Allah. Believers who wake up for Sahur are as if saying:

Dear Lord! Many thanks that I am among those who know You, love You, and devote their hearts to You. In order to indicate my loyalty to You, I woke up and interrupted my sleep I shall fast for Your sake today. O Allah! I hope that You will be pleased with me.

The time of sahur is before dawn. It is a time when the divine mercy and bounties shower us.

What is iftar?



The time for breaking the fast is called "iftar." The time of iftar is the same as the beginning of the Evening Prayer.



❁ Iftar is the happiest hour of those who spend the day without food and water for the sake of Allah. In iftar time, we feel the happiness of completing that day's fasting. We will experience the truest happiness when we get the rewards of fasting in the Hereafter.

❁ During Ramadan evenings, to offer iftar to those who fast is a highly rewarding act.

❁ As the sahur time, the iftar time is also a time that our prayers get accepted. Our Lord accepts our sincere prayers made at the iftar time. We must take advantage of these times and make supplications.

Our beloved Prophet said:

"There are two happy times for those who fast: one of them is the iftar time, and the other is when they join their Lord with the rewards of fasting."

(Bukhari, Sawm, 9)

"Whoever offers on iftar to a person who fasts receives a reward corresponding to that of fasting. Nothing would be taken from those who fasted."

(Tirmidhi, Sawm, 82)

"The supplications of three people are not rejected: the supplication that is made at iftar time by those who fasted, the supplication of a just ruler, and the supplication of the oppressed."

(Tirmidhi, Daawat, 128)



Supplication of Iftar

It is sunnah to make the following supplication at the time of iftar:

اَللّٰهُمَّ لَكَ صُيْمْتُ وَبِكَ اَمَنْتُ وَعَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَ عَلَي رِزْقِكَ اَفْطَرْتُ
وَصَوْمَ الْغَدِ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ نَوَيْتُ فَاغْفِرْ لِي مَا قَدَّمْتُ وَمَا اَخَّرْتُ.

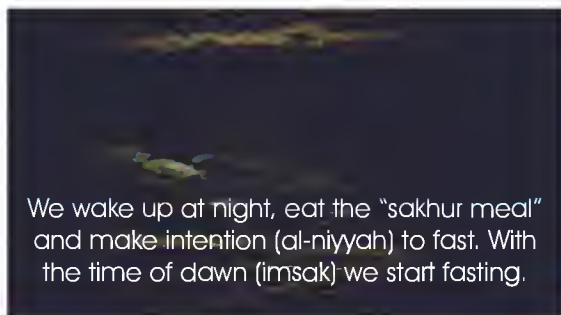
"Allahumma laka sumtu wa bika amantu wa alaika tawakkaltu wa ala rizqika aftartu wa sawma al-ghadi min shahri ramadana nawaytu faghfir li ma qaddamtu wa ma akhkhartu."

"O Allah! I fasted only for Your sake. I believe only in You, and I put my trust only in You. I break my fast with Your provisions. I make my intention to fast tomorrow. Please forgive my sins past and present."

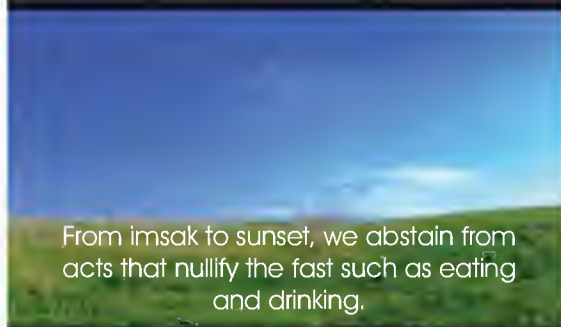


FASTING HOLDS US WHEN WE FAST

HOW DO WE FAST?



We wake up at night, eat the "sakhur meal" and make intention (al-niyyah) to fast. With the time of dawn (imsak) we start fasting.



From imsak to sunset, we abstain from acts that nullify the fast such as eating and drinking.

When the sun sets, we break our fast and eat "iftar meal." We thank Allah for the bounties that He provided.



Thus, we complete one day's fasting.

HOW DOES FASTING "HOLD" US?

Fasting is not just staying without food and drink until the evening. At the same time, it is to avoid all kinds of hideous and bad acts such as fighting, backbiting, and hurting others' feelings. Fasting that is done in this way is, as our master the Prophet puts it, "a shield that protects one from sins and hell fire."

If we do not stay away from the prohibited things (haram), even if we stay away from eating and drinking the permitted foods, our fasting does not mean anything in the sight of Allah. Our beloved Prophet informed us about this saying:

"Whoever does not give up forged speech and evil actions, Allah is not in need of his leaving his food and drink." (Bukhari, Sawm, 8)"

THE BENEFITS OF FASTING

BY FASTING

- We please our Almighty Lord, and gain His love and contentment.
- We remember that Allah is the one who provided us so many blessings, and thus we thank Him better.
- We learn to be patient.
- We stay away from bad and sinful acts, and get protection from Hell.
- We understand by experience what hunger and poverty means.
- We protect our health.

We fast by staying away from eating and drinking since it is the command of Allah. We do not break our fast secretly without anyone seeing us because we know that Allah sees us. Thus, we please our Almighty Lord, and gain His love and contentment.

Our master the Prophet said that Almighty Allah said:

"He has left his food, drink and desires for My sake. The fast is for Me. So I will reward (the fasting person) for it."

(Bukhari, Sawm, 4)

Most of the time, we do not realize the importance of things that we have until we lose them. When we fast, we get hungry and thirsty throughout the day. We realize the value of water and other bounties that we have. Thus, we remember that Allah is the one who provided us with various bounties, and we thank Him more.

Allah the Exalted says:

"So remember Me, and I shall remember you; and be grateful unto Me, and deny Me not."

(Al Baqarah - The Cow 2: 152)

One may face some difficulties and hardships in life. In order to handle these, one must be patient. Patience is one of the important conditions of being successful. When we fast, we tolerate hunger and thirst all day and learn to be patient.

Our beloved Prophet says:

"Fasting is half of patience"

(Ibn Majah, Siyam, 44)

Bad acts such as lying, gossiping, fighting, being unjust to others, and breaking someone's heart are sins that get us closer to Hell. We can only save ourselves from these sins if we take control of ourselves. In the month of Ramadan, we get into a spiritual training climate. When fasting, we know that we are in a state of continuous worship to Allah and learn to take control of ourselves. Thus, we stay away from sinful acts and are saved from hellfire.

Our beloved Prophet says:

"Fasting is a shield or protection from the fire and from committing sins. If one of you is fasting, he should avoid sexual relation with his wife and quarreling, and if somebody should fight or quarrel with him, he should say, 'I am fasting.'"

(Bukhari, Sawm, 9)

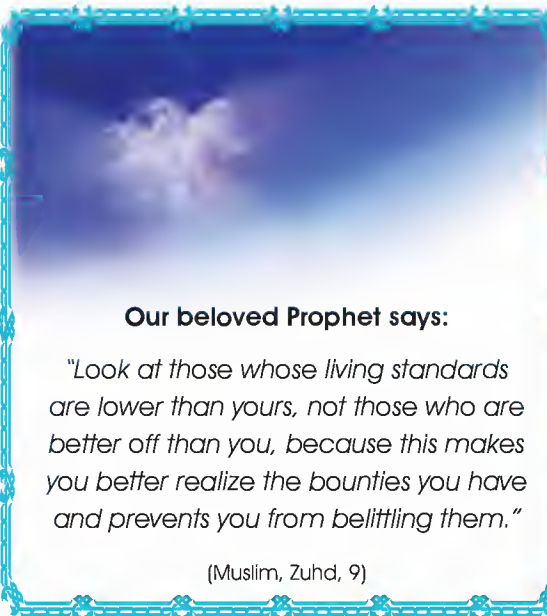


Those who never experienced hunger cannot perfectly realize the hunger and hardship that the poor go through. Comfortable and wealthy people cannot feel in their hearts the pain that the poor experience. When we fast, we begin to understand what hunger and being poor mean by actually experiencing it. We feel in our heart how the poor are surviving in their lives and the hardships that they experience. Our feelings of compassion and mercy develop. As a result of that, we help the poor and the orphans and share with them the bounties that we have.

Our beloved Prophet says:

"Look at those whose living standards are lower than yours, not those who are better off than you, because this makes you better realize the bounties you have and prevents you from belittling them."

(Muslim, Zuhd, 9)



Our stomach and other organs work day and night for eleven months. We all know that those with stomach problems are treated with a diet. In a sense, fasting works as a diet. In Ramadan first of all our stomach and then the rest of the digestion system takes a break, and therefore we sustain our health.

Our beloved Prophet says:

"Fast so that you find health."
(Tabarani, Mu'jam al-awsat, VIII, 174)



TYPES OF FASTING

OBLIGATORY FASTING



Fasting in the month of Ramadan

Fasting to make-up (Qada) missed Ramadan fasting

The expiation (Kaffara) of untimely broken fasts of the month of Ramadan.

Vowed (Nazr) fast

SUNNAH FASTING



Fasting in the month of Muharram

Fasting in the month of Shawwal

Fasting on Mandays and Thursdays

Fasting on the 13th - 14th - 15th. days of lunar months

The fasting of Prophet David

Fasting on the day before eid al-adha

REPREHENSIBLE FASTING



Fasting only on Fridays

Fasting only on Saturdays

UNLAWFUL FASTING



Fasting on the days of eid al-adha

Fasting on the first day of Eid al-Fitr

Fasting on the last day of the month of Shaban (yawm shak) thinking that it might be the first day of Ramadan.

Fasting during the second half of the month of Shaban, if one has not fasted during the first half of it

Prophet David was fasting a day and not the next day.



TYPES OF FASTING

There are four types of fasting: Obligatory, Sunnah, Prohibited and Reprehensible

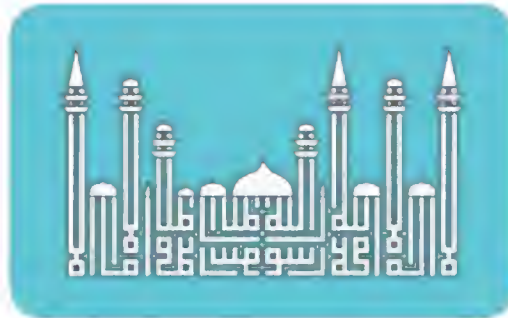
OBLIGATORY (WAJIB) FASTING ☺☺☺

- * Fasting during the month of Ramadan,
- * Fasting to make up (Qada) the missed Ramadan fasting,
- * The expiation (Kaffara) of untimely broken fasts of the month of Ramadan.
- * Vowed (Nazr) fast

SUNNAH FASTING ☺☺

It was our beloved Prophet's custom to fast some days other than the month of Ramadan. He also advised his Companions to fast at such times. Some of these customary fastings are:

- * Fasting on the ninth and tenth days or tenth and eleventh days of the month of Muharram,
- * Fasting six days in the month of Shawwal
- * Fasting on Mondays and Thursdays,
- * Fasting on the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth days of the lunar months,
- * Fasting one day and skipping the other day in days other than Ramadan (Fasting of Prophet David),
- * Fasting on the day before Eid al-Adha (This is a sunnah for those who are not performing pilgrimage)



PROHIBITED FASTING ☹☹☹

- * Fasting on the first day of the Ramadan Feast (Eid al-Fitr)
- * Fasting during all of the four days of the Sacrifice Feast (Eid al-Adha).
- * Fasting on the last day of the month of Shaban (yawm shak) thinking that it might be the first day of Ramadan.
- * Fasting during the second half of the month of Shaban, if one has not fasted during the first half of it.

REPREHENSIBLE FASTING ☹☹

- * Fasting only on the tenth day of Muharram, Ashura, without fasting the day before or the day after.
- * Fasting only on Fridays
- * Fasting only on Saturdays
- * Fasting only on Sundays
- * Except those who continue fasting in those days as part of another sunnah fasting.
- * Fasting the entire year

MAKE-UP (QADA) FASTING

What is a make-up fasting?

✍ It is a kind of fasting performed in place of the fasts nullified or missed accidentally or out of necessity.

When does one perform a make-up fast?

It can be performed on any day after the month of Ramadan except the days on which it is prohibited (unlawful or reprehensible) to fast.



FASTING AS EXPIATION (KAFFARA)

What is Kaffara?

✍ In addition to making up the fast, an expiation is obligatory on men for fast-days of Ramadan that are deliberately nullified by sexual intercourse. The expiation consists of fasting the days of two consecutive months. This fast, which is performed as a penalty, is called "Kaffara."

How many days is the Kaffara?

The length of the Kaffara is two lunar months. This is usually sixty days. When One additional day to make the nullified fast up is added to this, which makes the total sixty-one. For this reason, this fasting is also popularly referred to as "sixty-one."



ACTIONS THAT NULLIFY THE FAST

Not fasting a day in Ramadan or breaking a fast before its due time without an excuse is a sin. If we break our fast deliberately before sunset while we are aware that we are fasting, we should ask Allah's forgiveness for the sin that we committed. Those who break their fast untimely by something other than sexual intercourse need to make it up as a day for a day or under some circumstances give certain amount of food to the needy (fidya).

If we do one of the following actions, our fast gets nullified:

- Eating or drinking deliberately
- Ingesting something inside the body through nose, mouth, ear, or genitals
- Deliberately vomiting,
- Deliberately having sexual intercourse
- Ejaculation because of lustful thinking or looking
- For women, onset of menstrual period or the period after childbirth
- Losing consciousness by fainting, getting drunk, or losing mind
- Converting out of Islam

nullify fasting. ••

The fasts unperformed in the month of Ramadan should be made-up before the next month of Ramadan. If one delays without an excuse and does not make the unperformed days up before the next Ramadan, he/she becomes a sinner. In addition to making up the missed days, one should also pay fidya or monetary compensation for each day missed. Fidya is paid out with the most common food in a city. It should be given to the needy as a charity. If someone makes up his/her missed fasts ten years later, he/she should pay fidya for ten years.

But if one's excuse for not performing a fast persists, then it is permissible for one to delay making it up as long as the excuse is present. One is not obliged to pay fidya for this delay even if several Ramadans pass by, but is merely obliged to make up the missed fastdays.





THINGS THAT ARE REPREHENSIBLE WHILE FASTING ☹☹

Doing the following things are reprehensible for the person fasting:

While
fasting

- ☹ having fight with others
- ☹ delaying of the fast breaking after sunset
- ☹ tasting food without swallowing it
- ☹ giving blood
- ☹ kissing one's wife without sexually arousing
- ☹ hugging one's wife
- ☹ having a shower or bathing
- ☹ using toothstick (miswak) after noon
- ☹ smelling something nice
- ☹ Lining the eyes with kohl

are reprehensible.



ACTIONS THAT DO NOT NULLIFY THE FAST

- ✖ Eating or drinking out of forgetfulness,
- ✖ Swallowing food particles smaller than a chickpea that remain between the teeth after a meal
- ✖ Doing something that nullifies the fast under compulsion or threat
- ✖ Swallowing one's own saliva
- ✖ Swallowing the wetness left after washing the mouth along with saliva,
- ✖ Having smoke or dust enter into nose or mouth unwillingly
- ✖ having a wet dream,
- ✖ Bathing,
- ✖ Using eye drops,
- ✖ Having tooth extraction provided that blood is not swallowed
- ✖ Unvoluntary vomiting,
- ✖ Using tooth brush without tooth paste
- ✖ Giving blood
- ✖ Having an injection

do not nullify the fast

* If one eats or drinks absentmindedly, he/she should stop eating or drinking as soon as he remembers. This does not nullify fasting. 🌸 He/she should wash his/her mouth and continue to fast. If he/she does not quit eating or drinking after remembering he is fasting, his/her fast is nullified 🌸 and needs to be made up.

Our beloved Prophet said:

"Whosoever eats and drinks while fasting due to forgetfulness, he should complete his fast. That is because Allah made him eat or drink."











(Bukhari, Sawm, 26)

UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS IS ONE NOT OBLIGED TO FAST?

Islam is a religion that makes our life easier. Allah the Exalted does not hold His subjects responsible for the things they are not capable of. This condition holds for fasting as well. It is a sin not to fast during the month of Ramadan without an excuse. However, in some cases, it is permissible not to fast or break the fast that has already started. After Ramadan, the fasts that

are not performed should be made up as soon as possible.

The following are the conditions that our religion considers as valid excuses for not fasting or for breaking the fast in Ramadan:

1	Traveling	 In Ramadan, those who travel at least 83 kilometers and intend a stay of less than 4 days do not have to fast. However, it is better if they fast.
2	Illness	 Those who worry that the illness will cause danger to their health or the healing process will slow down do not have to fast. In these situations one may also break the fast that is already started.  One should be diagnosed by a pious doctor whether the illness would be damaging if he fasts or if he does not have an opportunity to consult a doctor, he should earnestly feel that this is the case.
3	Old Age	 The elderly who are unable to perform fasting do not have to fast.  Those who have no hope to be able to fast again pay fidya for each day they could not fast.
4	Breast feeding or pregnant woman	 If a breast-feeding or pregnant woman worries that fasting may harm her or her baby, she does not have to fast.
5	During menstrual period or the puerperal period after childbirth	 If a woman starts menstruation or gives birth, she breaks her fast. She does not fast during menstruation or puerperal days.
6	Fighting with the enemy	 A soldier who worries that he won't have the strength to fight with the enemy does not have to fast during Ramadan.
7	Being under compulsion or threat	 A person who is under the threat of being killed or wounded does not have to fast or may break the fast that he has started.
8	Extreme hunger or thirst	 A person who worries that hunger and thirst may damage his brain or body may break the fast that he has started. Similarly someone who works at heavy jobs like farmwork and is afraid that fasting may give him harm does not have to fast.

MONETARY COMPENSATION (FIDYA) FOR THE MISSED FASTDAYS



✍ As we mentioned before, if one does not fast some days during Ramadan, it is obligatory to make up these missed fasts before the next Ramadan arrives, regardless of whether these fasts were missed because of a valid excuse (e.g. menstruation, travel, sickness, etc.) or without a valid excuse. However, The elderly who do not have the strength to fast and those who have chronic illness and have no hope to recover do not have to make qada for their

missed fastdays. Instead they must give food or money to the poor and needy for each day that they could not fast. This is called **"fidyah or monetary compensation."**

📖 The amount of fidya is the same as zakat al-fitr (alms paid in Ramadan). The Fidyah for one day of fast is equal to an average person's two meals for a day. Fidyah may differ based on the person's economic status and the locality he/she lives in. It can be paid in food or in money.

ALMS PAID TO THE POOR IN RAMADAN (ZAKAT AL-FITR)



✍ Zakat al-Fitr is a type of alms paid by the Muslims who are considered rich according to the measures of Islamic law for themselves and for the family members dependent on them. This obligatory alms given in the month of Ramadan is known as "zakat al-fitr."

✍ Zakat al-Fitr should be paid before the eid al-fitr. In this way, poor people will be happy and they will be able to take care of their needs before the festival.

The amount of Fitr is one sa' (about 2.400 gr) of certain types of crops. A believer should pay zakat al-fitr for himself, for his children, and for the believers dependent upon him.

✍ Zakat al-Fitr can be paid in the form of the main crop of the area such as wheat, rice, raisin, chickpeas, or corn.

✍ Today the value of the main crop is calculated and zakat al-fitr can be paid in cash. Because money is usually better than food to take care of poor people's needs. With food the poor people may only satisfy their hunger, whereas with money, they can buy anything they need.

✍ Fitr should be given to the poor people living in the closest neighborhood. It is not allowed to be sent to the poor living in other regions. However if there is no needy people in a region, fitr can be sent to other regions.

✍ The time for the payment of fitr: Zakat al-fitr becomes obligatory when the sun sets on the evening of the last day of Ramadan. However, just like the payment of obligatory alms before its due time, it is permissible to give zakat al-fitr anytime in the month of Ramadan.

✍ It is reprehensible to delay its payment until the night of the first day of the eid, and it is a sin to delay until after the eid. Although after the first day of eid the due time for zakat al-fitr passes, it must still be paid.

✍ Zakat al-fitr is the alm for our body and health. It is a way of showing our gratitude to Allah who created us, let us live as Muslims, and let us reach the month of Ramadan in health and welfare.

VOWED FASTING ☺☺☺☺

✍ Vowed fasting is the fast that we promise to perform for the sake of Allah. It is obligatory to fulfill such vows.

There are two types of vowed fast:

1. Vowed fasting attached to a certain condition

➤ For instance, "If someone vows to fast for three days for the sake of Allah, if his/her mother recovers from an illness" he/she

needs to fast for three days when his/her mother recovers from the illness.

2. Vowed fasting not attached to certain conditions

➤ For instance, "If we promise to fast three days for the sake of Allah" he/she needs to fast three days. Or "If we vow to fast on a certain day, such as next Monday, for the sake of Allah", we need to fast on that specific date.

TARAWIH PRAYER (SALAT AL-TARAWIH) ☺☺

✿ Tarawih Prayer is a twenty-cycle (rakah) prayer that is performed in the month of Ramadan. Performance of this prayer is an emphasized (muakkad) sunnah both for men and women.

✿ As we can perform this prayer in the mosque with the congregation, we can also perform it alone at home. However, it is better to perform it in congregation in terms of divine rewards.

✿ It is also sunnah to perform this prayer for those who cannot fast due to an excuse. It is required to perform it in cycles of two.

SPIRITUAL RETREAT ☺☺

✍ "I'tikaf" means to stay in a mosque or in a prayer house for a period of time with the intention of worship.

✿ After fasting had become obligatory, our Prophet spent the last ten days of Ramadan in i'tikaf until he passed away. Therefore, it is a sunnah to retreat in the mosque for the last ten days of Ramadan.

✿ Before retreating in a mosque, we put on clean clothes and nice fragrances. While we are in retreat, we recite the Noble Qur'an, say supplications, read sayings of Prophet Muhammad (hadith) and books about Islam. We chant the names of Allah, and perform supererogatory or make-up (qada) Prayers. We continuously pray and avoid idle and unnecessary talk. We watch our behavior, thinking that we are in the presence of our Lord.

THE FIRST TARAWIH

It was a Ramadan night during the age of Happiness. There were only seven days left until the end of Ramadan. Until that day, the Prophet (upon him blessings and peace) used to stay in his house after leading the night prayer (Salat al-'Isha.) However, that night, for the first time, he came out again and led the tarawih prayer. Tarawih prayer lasted till one third of the night had passed.

The following day, the news that the Prophet (upon him blessings and peace) had led the performance of tarawih prayer spread. However, he did not lead the tarawih prayer that night.

On the next day, he led another tarawih prayer. Prayer lasted until midnight. On the next day, he again did not perform the prayer.

Finally, when there were three days left till the end of Ramadan, he again led a tarawih prayer that lasted the whole night. However, he did not lead another tarawih prayer lest it might be confused with an obligatory (fard) prayer. He advised everyone to perform it in their houses.

The regular performance of tarawih prayer in mosques with congregation started in the era of Caliph Umar.



THE NIGHT OF WORTH (LAYLAT AL-QADR) C

- C Just as Ramadan has a special place among the other months, the Night of Power has a special place among the other nights. Allah the Exalted says: **"We have indeed revealed this (Message) in the Night of Power: And what will explain to you what the Night of Power is? The Night of Power is better than a thousand Months. Therein come down the angels and the Spirit by Allah's permission, on every errand: Peace! This until the rise of Morning!"** (Qadr 97; 1-5)
- C The Night of Power is a blessed night. It is a time when Allah's mercy and benediction is bestowed, the sins of all Muslims are forgiven and supplications are answered.
- C The Prophet would spend more time in worshipping in the last ten days of Ramadan. One reason was that the Night of Qadr that is "better than a thousand months" is among these days.
- C We should as well utilize the last ten days of Ramadan, especially the 27th night. We must try to gain our Lord's good pleasure in the Night of Qadr that is announced to be worthier than a lifetime, that is, eighty-three years. We must realize the value of this night on which the first verses of the Noble Quran were revealed and the sun of Islam rose. We should spend it thus;
 - ✳ Attending sermons in mosques,
 - ✳ Reciting the Holy Quran,
 - ✳ Performing ritual prayers,
 - ✳ Saying prayers,
 - ✳ Saying blessings on our Prophet
 - ✳ We should benefit from the night of Qadr by asking forgiveness from Allah for our sins and thus appreciate the value of that night.

Our beloved Prophet said:

"All the past sins of a person are forgiven if he utilizes the Night of Worth by believing in its virtue and expecting its rewards only from Allah."

(Bukhari, Iman, 25)

One day, Her Excellency Aisho asked our Prophet: "O the Messenger of Allah! If I know what night is the Night of Worth, what should I do during it?" Our Prophet taught her the following supplication: "O Allah, You are most forgiving and You love to forgive, so forgive me."

(Tirmidhi, Daawat, 84)

The supplication for the Night of Worth

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

Arabic Transliteration:

"Allahumma innaka `afuwun tuhibbul
`afwa fa`fu `annee"

"O Allah, You are pardoning and You love to
pardon, so pardon me."



FESTIVAL OF COMPLETION OF THE MONTH OF RAMADAN (EID AL-FITR)

Islam declared it obligatory (fard) to fast during the month of Ramadan. It also announced the first day of Shawwal a festival for Muslims.

In the last days of Ramadan, we feel sorry that Ramadan is ending but we also feel happy that the Eid al-Fitr is coming. We spend the last day of Ramadan wondering whether we spent Ramadan as we are supposed to and praying to reach the next Ramadan and also making preparations for the eid day. Early in the morning we dress up and run to the mosque. We start the eid day by performing the festival prayer and show our thankfulness to Allah.

Eid is not a vacation day but a day of peace and happiness that is celebrated together. On the eid day, we first congratulate our elders' holiday and receive their good invocations. We visit our friends and families. We give warm eid greetings to the people we come across. We show kindness to the destitute and orphans, and inquire about the health of the sick and the elderly. We quit resentments and reconcile those who have offended each other. We strengthen our friendship and family relations in these festivals. Our mercy, compassion, and feelings of loyalty develop. Our hearts open up to the poor and the unfortunate.



OUR PROPHET'S LIFE DURING THE MONTH OF RAMADAN



The Good News from Our Prophet about the Month of Ramadan



Our Master the Prophet would long for the month of Ramadan. He would become very happy when he reached the three sacred months, and he would supplicate saying: **"O Allah! Make the months of Rajab and Sha'ban blessed for us, and let us reach the month of Ramadan."**

He would fast in Rajab and Sha'ban more than usual. He would give the good news of Ramadan saying:

"When the blessed month of Ramadan comes, the gates of paradise are opened and

the gates of hellfire are closed, and the devils are chained."

"In Paradise there are eight gates, among which is a gate called al-Rayyan, which none will enter but those who fast. It would be proclaimed: Where are the observers of fast that they should be admitted into it? -and when the last of them would enter, it would be closed and no one would enter it. Such a drink will be offered to those who enter from this door that those who drink it will never feel thirsty again"



The Sakhur (Pre-dawn meal) of Our Prophet



Our beloved Prophet would attach special importance to sakhur time. "Do not neglect waking up for sakhur, because the food of sakhur is a blessed food." As an example, one night when he was calling one of the poor Companions, Irbad Ibn Sariyah, who used to live in the shelter next to the Prophet's Mosque and one of the first happy ones to convert to Islam, He said: "Come and join the blessed food!"

Another time, he expressed the importance of waking up for sakhur saying:

"The sakhur food is blessed. Do not neglect it. Have something at sakhur even if it is just a sip of water. Allah the Exalted and His angels would shower mercy on those who have sakhur."

Our Prophet's Iftar

Our Lord the Exalted becomes pleased to see His servants' loyalty and respect. The iftar time is the best time to show this loyalty and respect. For this reason, our Master the Prophet paid special attention to the time of the iftar.

He would become happy like children and point out that breaking the fast immediately pleases Allah and brings goodness and benediction:

'As long as they show effort to break their fast as soon as the iftar time arrives, my followers

will not be deviated from path of goodness and benediction.' (Bukhari, Sawm, 45)

Allah's Messenger, who said that supplications made before iftar would not be refused, prayed at the time of iftar saying:

"Oh, Allah! For Your sake I have fasted and with Your sustenance I have broken my fast." Then he would break his fast with a date if there was one, otherwise with water. He recommended that we do the same.



The Generosity of Our Prophet in Ramadan

The well-known generosity of the Messenger of Allah would increase even more in the month of Ramadan. During the three sacred months, he would become more generous than "a continuously blowing wind." He would distribute among Muslims whatever he had. If something

was asked from him he would immediately give it; if it was something that he did not have, he would find it from his friends. He would respond to those who asked him which charity was more acceptable: "Charity that is given in the month of Ramadan!"



Prophet's Acts of Worship in the Month of Ramadan

An increase would be observed in the Prophet's supererogatory acts of worship in Ramadan. Tarawih prayer was definitely the most obvious one of those acts.

In this month of worship, prayer, and remembrance our Prophet would recite the Noble Qur'an more than the other months. As a matter of fact, Angel Gabriel would come to our Prophet every night during Ramadan and they would recite the Noble Qur'an to each other. This recitation, which used to be done once every year, was done twice in the last Ramadan of our Prophet.

Towards the end of Ramadan, there would be a noticeable increase in our Prophet's acts of worship. The likelihood that the Night of Power (Laylat al-Qadr) is one of the last ten nights of the Ramadan, especially that it is one of the odd nights (21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th, or 29th) would encourage him to show extra effort not to miss that night. He used to say:

"Whoever performs prayers on the night of Qadr out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allah's rewards (not to show off) then all his past sins will be forgiven"

During the last ten days of Ramadan, our Prophet (upon him blessings and peace) would retreat in Masjid Nabawi (the Mosque of the Prophet). He would occupy himself during these days with acts of worship such as prayer, supplication, and invocation. As if he was saying "Dear Lord! I come to your door and will not go anywhere until you forgive me."

M. Yaşar Kandemir

FASTING AND RECITATION OF THE QUR'AN INTERCEDE FOR US

Pointing out the special spiritual rewards and richness which we would gain from recitation of the Noble Qur'an during the month of Ramadan, Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

Fasting and recitation of the Qur'an during Ramadan intercede for us.

Fasting says:

Dear Lord! I prevented this servant of Yours from eating and other material temptations for the whole day. Please accept my intercession for him!

Recitations of the Noble Qur'an say:

I prevented this servant of Yours from sleeping at night. Please accept my intercession for him!

Thus, both of them intercede for that person.

(Ahmad b. Hanbal, Musnad, VI, 188)

RAMADAN

The world is flooded in light,
A test for God's each servant,
For those who say "I am a believer,"
The fasting month of Ramadan.

It affects the carnal self,
You stay energetic as a soul,
Our Ramadan fasting
Is one of the great five Fards.

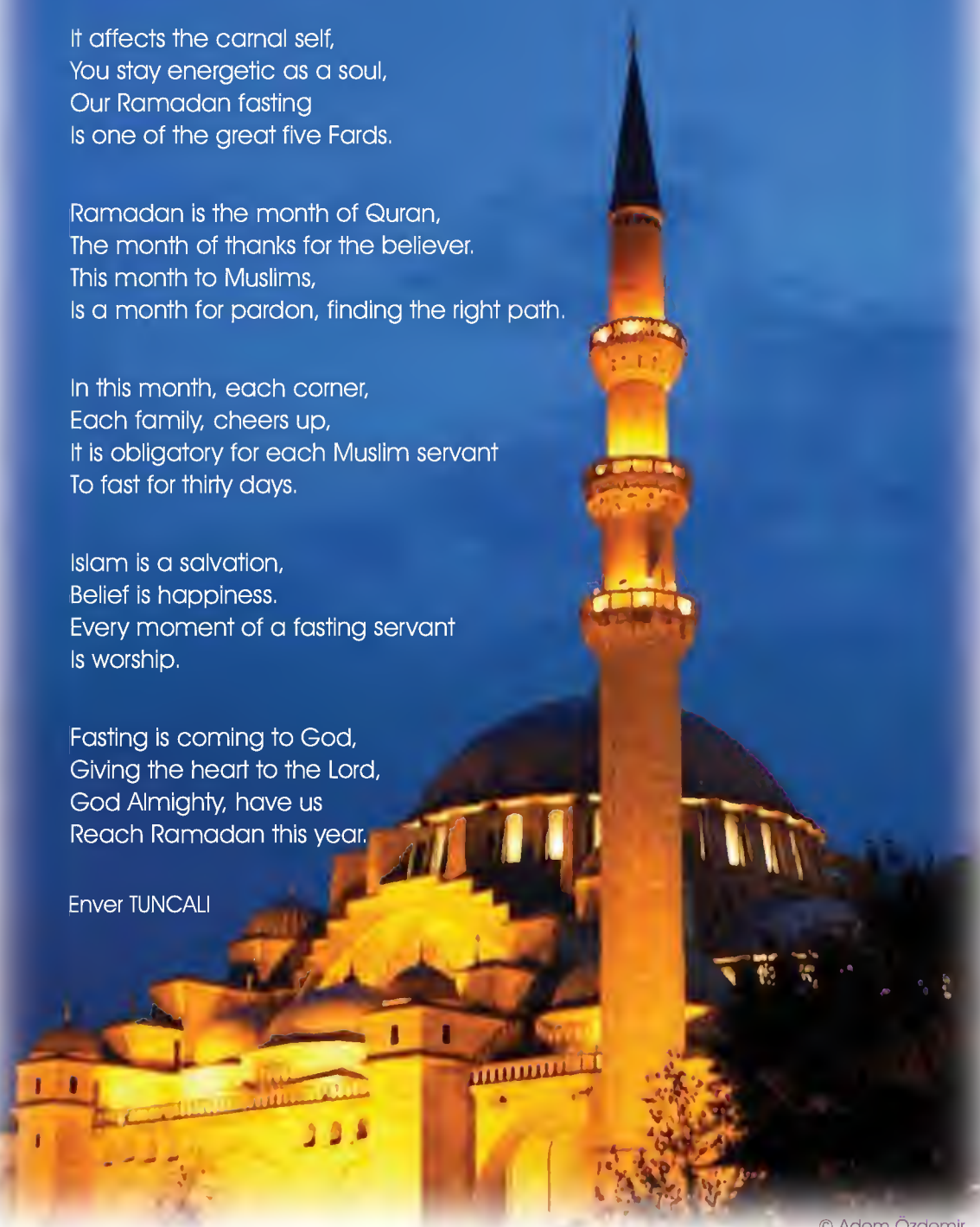
Ramadan is the month of Quran,
The month of thanks for the believer.
This month to Muslims,
Is a month for pardon, finding the right path.

In this month, each corner,
Each family, cheers up,
It is obligatory for each Muslim servant
To fast for thirty days.

Islam is a salvation,
Belief is happiness.
Every moment of a fasting servant
Is worship.

Fasting is coming to God,
Giving the heart to the Lord,
God Almighty, have us
Reach Ramadan this year.

Enver TUNCALI



QUESTIONS

Let's Check Our Knowledge

For the sentences below, check the RIGHT or WRONG boxes accordingly.

1. Fasting is an important worship that protects us from wrongdoings in this world and from Hell in the Hereafter, and leads to the forgiveness of our sins ☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
2. Eating and drinking deliberately without an excuse while fasting in Ramadan requires both qada and kaffara. ☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
3. The elderly who do not have the strength to fast during the month of Ramadan and the sick who have no hope to get better give certain amount of food for each day that they could not fast. ☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
4. Vowed fasting for the sake of Allah is called kaffaro. ☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
5. To stay in a mosque or prayer house for a period of time is called iftar. ☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
6. The Noble Qur'an started to be revealed in The Night of Ascension (Laylat al-Mi'raj). ☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
7. The fasting of those who eat or drink forgetting that they are fasting gets nullified. ☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
8. The Prophet's saying "fasting is a shield" means that fasting protects us from wrongdoings and sins. ☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG

Let's Test Our Knowledge

1. Which one of the acts listed below is not related to month of Ramadan?
 - a) Going to pilgrimage.
 - b) Fasting.
 - c) Beginning of the revelation of the Qur'an
 - d) The Night of Power.
2. Which one of the acts listed below is not among the benefits of fasting?
 - a) By fasting, we gain the love and contentment of Allah.
 - b) By fasting, we help the poor
 - c) By fasting, we stay away from wrongdoings and sins, which protects us from hellfire.
 - d) By fasting, we learn to be patient

3. Which one of the acts listed below is among the obligatory (fard) fasts?
 - a) Supererogatory fasting
 - b) Fasting in the month of Muharram
 - c) Fasting in Romadan
 - d) Fasting on Mondays and Thursdays
4. What is the term used for the time when the night ends and the day begins?
 - a) Fajr b) Sakhur c) Iftar d) I'tikaf
5. Which one of the acts listed below does not nullify fasting?
 - a) To eat something that is normally not considered food.
 - b) To swallow one's saliva.
 - c) To swallow a snow particle or hailstone intentionally.
 - d) To swallow water accidentally while making ablution (wudhu).
6. Which one of the acts listed below nullifies the fast but requires qada (day for day make-up)?
 - a) Accidentally getting water into one's eor while taking a shower
 - b) Getting dust or smoke into one's throat unintentionally
 - c) Breaking the fast by force and due to a threat.
 - d) Unintentional Vomiting
7. Which one of the reasons listed below is the most important one why Muslims fast during the month of Ramadan?
 - a) Desire to control their carnal self.
 - b) Desire to live healthy lives
 - c) Desire to build good relations with others.
 - d) To fulfill the command of Allah the Exalted
8. Which one of the acts listed below does not nullify the fast?
 - a) Breaking the fast thinking that the time has come when it has not.
 - b) To take shower or bathe in order to cool down
 - c) To swallow food that was stuck in between the teeth and that is bigger than a chickpea
 - d) To swallow a snow particle, hailstone, or a rain drop unintentionally.
9. Which one of the reasons listed below is not considered a valid excuse to break the fast?
 - a) To have a visitor at home
 - b) To get threatened to be killed or wounded
 - c) To be in bottle against an enemy.
 - d) To be a traveler

Fill in the blanks

Fill in the blanks with the words in the parenthesis.

(Power/mercy/forgive/ sixty-one/ forgiveness of sins /qada / nadhr/ health/ al-Rayyan)

1. The month of Ramadan is such a month that there is in the beginning, there is in the middle, and there is salvation from hellfire in the end.
2. Fast so you find.....
3. The kaffara for intentionally breaking the Ramadan fast by sexual intercourse is to fast..... days
4. A person who continues to eat and drink thinking that the fast got nullified after eating or drinking something upon forgetting must repay the fast as fasting.
5. Vowed fasting for the sake of Allah is called
6. Our Prophet used to pray in the Night of as: "O Allah, You are forgiving and You love to forgive, so me!"
7. "In Paradise there are eight gates, among which is a gate called, which none will enter but those who fast. It would be proclaimed: Where are the observers of fast that they should be admitted into it? -and when the last of them would enter, it would be closed and no one would enter it. Such a drink will be offered to those who enter from this door that those who drink it will never feel thirsty again".



THE BRIDGE BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR:



ZAKAT



- ❁ *Sadaqah (Charity) and Zakat (Alms)*
- ❁ *The definition of Zakat*
- ❁ *The benefits of Zakat*
- ❁ *Rulings related to Zakat*
- ❁ *To what things should we pay attention when giving zakat*
- ❁ *The benevolence of our Prophet*



THE TEST OF GRATITUDE

Our master the Prophet (upon him blessings and peace) used to narrate stories from the past to his friends.

One of those stories went like this:

"Among the Sons of Israel, there were three people; one had a spotted skin, one was bald, and the other one was blind. Allah the Exalted wanted to test them and send an angel in human form to them.

The angel came to the one with the spotted skin and asked:

— What is the thing that you wanted the most? He said:

— A beautiful skin color, a nice skin, and getting rid of this condition that drives people

away from me. Upon this the angel patted his skin.

Upon the touch of the angel, the spots on his skin disappeared. This time the angel asked:

— What do you want to possess most? The man answered:

— A camel.

After giving him a pregnant camel, the angel left praying as:

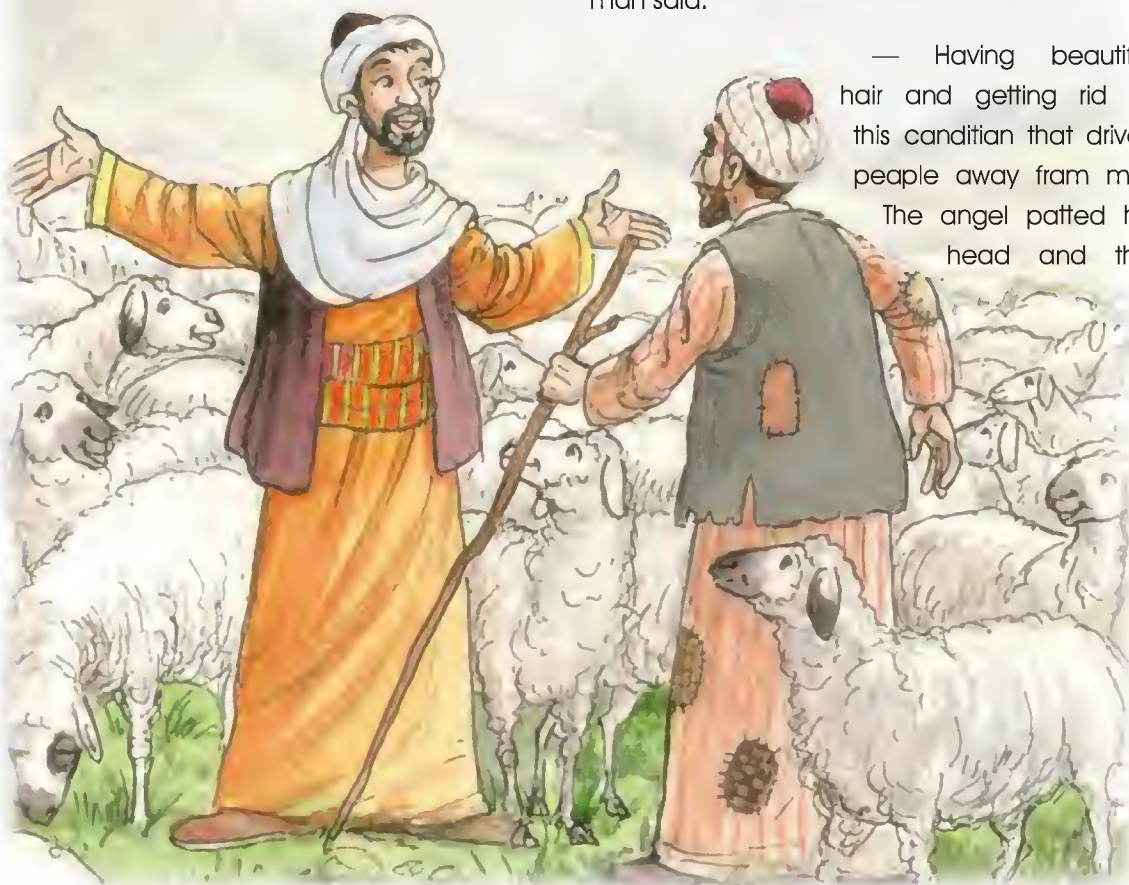
— May Allah make this camel beautiful to you!

Then the angel went to the bald man and asked:

— What do you want the most? And the man said:

— Having beautiful hair and getting rid of this condition that drives people away from me.

The angel patted his head and the



baldness disappeared. He had luxuriant thick hair.

The angel asked:

— What do you want to possess the most?

— Cattle, the man said. The angel gave him a pregnant head of cattle and prayed for him as:

— May Allah make these cattle bountiful for you. Then, the angel went to the blind and asked:

What do you want the most?

The blind man said:

— I want Allah to give my eyes back so that I can see people. When the angel touched his eyes, the man started to see. Angel asked:

— What do you want to possess the most?

— A head of sheep, he answered. The angel gave him a pregnant head of sheep.

The camel, cattle, and the sheep all had their offspring. In time, all of their possessions accumulated. One of them had a valley full of camels, the other one had a valley full of cattle, and another one had a valley full of sheep.

Later on the angel appeared as a spotted-skinned man to the man who was once so and said:

— I am a poor man. I lack the means to continue my journey. I can only reach where I want to go by the help of Allah first and then yours. I want one camel for the sake of Allah Who gave you this beautiful color, nice skin, and all of this wealth.

The man refused this by saying:

— It is impossible. There are so many people who have rights on this wealth. There are so many places to give from this wealth until it is your turn. Upon this the angel said:

— I think I know you. Aren't you the spotted skinned poor man that people stayed away from and whom Allah made rich? Allah gave you health and wealth.

However, the man refused the truth and said:

— You have talked too much; this wealth was inherited from my ancestors. The angel cursed him as:

— If you are lying, may Allah return you to your previous state.

Then the angel turned blind and went to the man who used to be bold and said the same things and the once-bold man answered in the same manner. The angel left him by saying:

— If you are lying, may Allah return you to your previous state.

Then the angel turned blind and went to the man who used to be blind and said:

— I am a poor traveler. I do not have the means to continue on my journey. I can only go on first with Allah's and then your help. I want a head of sheep from you for the sake of Allah who gave back your eyes. The man said:

— I used to be blind once, and Allah opened my eyes. I used to be poor, Allah made me rich. Take whatever you want, leave the ones you do not want. I swear I will not make things difficult for you. Upon this, the angel said:

— Let all this be yours. This was a test for you. Allah is pleased with you. The other two lost the test and faced Allah's wrath, and the angel disappeared.

(Bukhari, Anbiya 51; Muslim, Zuhd 10)

WHO IS THE REAL OWNER OF OUR WEALTH?

Islam encourages humans to work and earn money through lawful (halal) ways. However, we should not forget the following fact:

Allah the Exalted is the one who gives us all these blessings. He is the real owner of our wealth and property. He has entrusted us with all these blessings for a certain period of time. He wants to test us if we use these blessings in the way He pleases or not. He commanded us to share the part of our wealth which is more than we need with the poor and needy.

We pass the test if we spend the wealth that Allah has entrusted us in a way that He wanted us to spend.

Allah the Exalted says:

"Say: O Allah. Lord of Power (And Rule), You give power to whom You please, and You strip off power from whom You please: You endue with honour whom You please, and You bring low whom You please: In Your hand is all good. Verily, over all things You have power."

(Al-Imran, 3: 26)



CHARITY (SADAQAH) AND ALMS-GIVING (ZAKAT)

Spending the blessings that Allah bestowed upon us in His way is called "infoq" in Islam. The best way of infoq is to give part of the blessings given to us as zakat and sadaqah.

Sadaqah is the voluntary charity given by a Muslim for the sake of Allah. When we say sodoqah, usually a monetary help given to the poor is understood. However, sadaqah has a broader meaning than monetary or material help. Our Prophet informs us that all of our nice deeds are considered sodoqah. He gave us many examples of kind acts that are as valuable as sadaqah in terms of divine rewards. Here are some examples of sadaqah according to sayings of the Prophet:

- ◆ Donations to the needy is a sadaqah
- ◆ Giving extra time to a debtor who is having difficulty in his payment is o sadaqah.
- ◆ Advising someone to do good deeds and warn them against wrongdoings is a sadaqah.
- ◆ Removing the harmful things from the roads is a sadaqah.
- ◆ Giving directions to someone is a sadaqah.
- ◆ Helping those who try to get into their vehicle or helping them carry something is a sadaqah.
- ◆ Helping disputing people to find a compromise among them is a sadaqah.
- ◆ Remembering Allah by saying "Allahu Akbar", "La ilahe illallah" and "Alhamdulillah" is a sadaqah.
- ◆ Behaving in a friendly manner is a sadaqah.
- ◆ Speaking nicely is a sadaqah.
- ◆ Gain knowledge and teaching is a sadaqah.
- ◆ Every step towards the masjid while going to a prayer is a sadaqah.
- ◆ Planting a tree is a sadaqah.
- ◆ Everything a man do to make his wife happy is a sadaqah
- ◆ Everything a woman does for her husband and children is a sadaqah.
- ◆ A child's help and good deeds towards his father, mother, and siblings is sadaqah.



Allah the Exalted says:

"O you who believe! Spend out of (the bounties) We have provided for you..."

[al-Baqara 2: 254]

In short;

A Muslim's "every good deed done to gain Allah's pleasure is sadaqah." (Bukhori, Adab, 33).

As seen, sadaqah has a very broad meaning in Islam. In order for a Muslim to give sodoqoh, he does not have to be rich. Every Muslim can give sadaqah according to his means or can earn spiritual rewards of sadaqah by behaving nicely. However, infaq has an exclusively material dimension as well.

Our Lord Almighty made obligatory upon Muslims who have a certain amount of wealth to share some of it with the needy. This act of worship, done with material goods and one of the five Pillors of Islam, is called Zakat.

Once our beloved Master the Prophet said:

— Giving alms (sadaqah) is every Muslim's duty.

Upon this his friends said:

— What would someone do if he cannot find anything to give os sadaqah?

Our Prophet said:

— That person may work and he can be both useful to himself and give sadaqah.

— What if he cannot work or cannot find a job to work?

— He would help those who are needy,

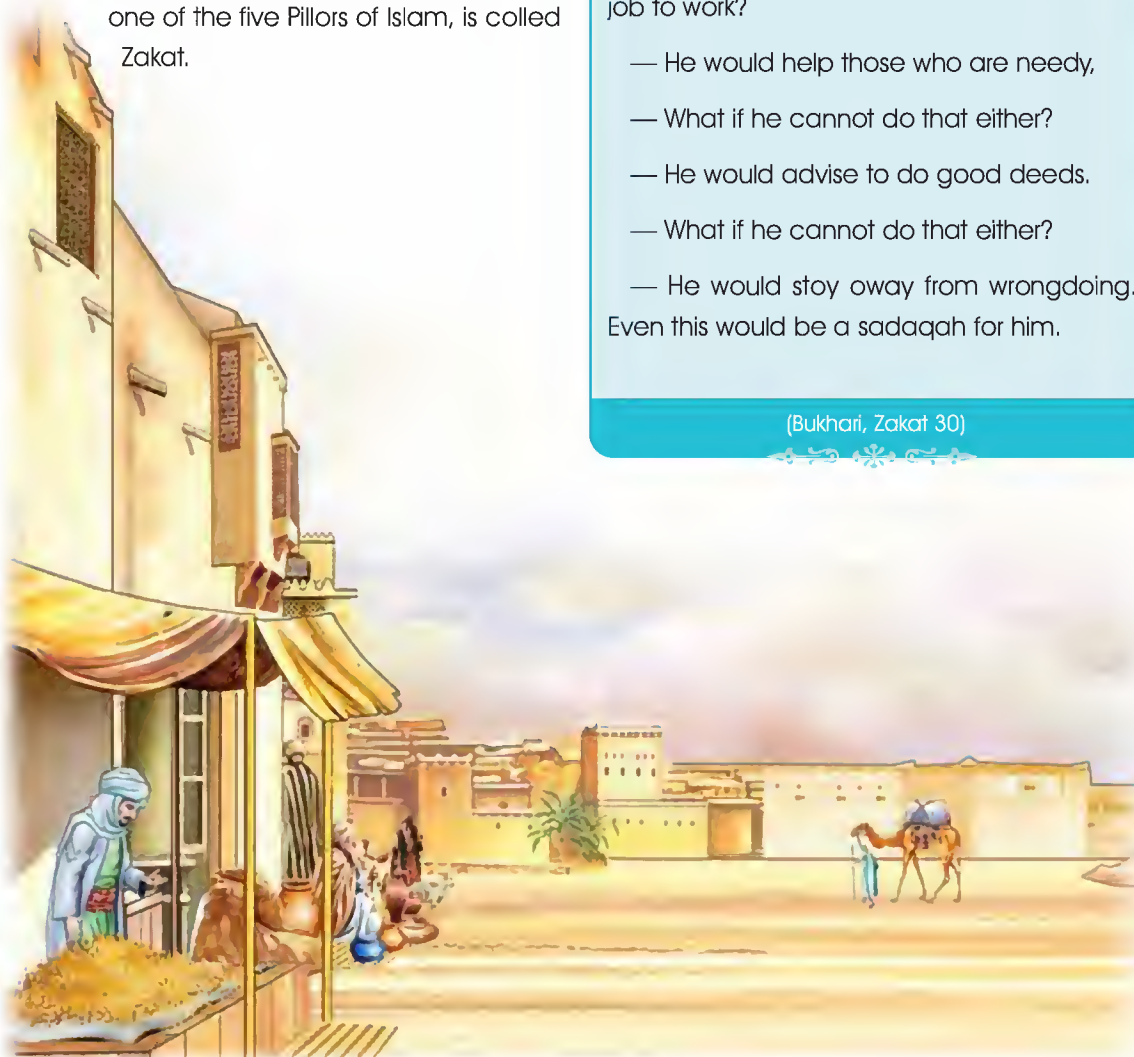
— What if he cannot do that either?

— He would advise to do good deeds.

— What if he cannot do that either?


— He would stoy oway from wrongdoing. Even this would be a sadaqah for him.

(Bukhari, Zakat 30)





WHAT IS ZAKAT?

 **Zakat** is the term used for the certain amount of money given to certain group of people from certain types of property which has reached to a certain amount.

Allah the Exalted says:

"And be steadfast in prayer and regular in charity: And whatever good you send forth for your souls before you, you shall find it with Allah. For Allah sees well all that you do."

al-Baqara, 2: 110

Zakat is a Type of Purification

One of the literary definitions of zakat is "purification." Giving a certain amount of one's income and wealth to the needy purifies the person both materially and morally. It purifies the person from the impurity of sin and stinginess. It cures the illness of materialism in human beings.

"Of their goods, take alms, so that you mightest purify and sanctify them; and pray on their behalf."

(Tawbah, 9; 103)

THE BENEFITS OF ZAKAT

ZAKAT

- helps us to appropriately thank Allah Most High for our wealth.
- strengthens the feelings of compassion, mercy, and kindness.
- purifies our wealth.
- protects us from stinginess and selfishness.
- strengthens solidarity and love in our society.
- makes our wealth blessed and abundant.
- protects our wealth from trouble and evil.

Allah the Exalted says:

"The parable of those who spend their substance in the way of Allah is that of a grain of corn: it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allah gives manifold increase to whom He pleases: And Allah cares for all and He knows all things."

al-Baqara, 2: 261)



We must thank our Exalted Lord for all the blessings that He provided. Using the blessings we have just as Allah wants us to use them is the most important way of showing our thanks to Allah. By giving one fortieth of our wealth to the needy, we worship and thank Allah who gave us that wealth. We should not expect thanks from anyone due to the zakat that we gave. Thus, zakat makes us thank Allah appropriately for the wealth that He has given us.

Allah the Exalted says:

"And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive, (Saying), 'We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks. 'We only fear a Day of distressful Wrath from the side of our Lord.' But Allah will deliver them from the evil of that Day, and will shed over them a Light of Beauty and (blissful) Joy."

al-Insan, 76: 8-11

Since rich people have many means, they may not understand the situation of the poor. When we search for poor and needy people to give our zakat to, we may have the opportunity to see their situation from a closer perspective. We can see the hard and troubling living standards of the poor. We relieve the troubles of the poor and needy by helping them. Sharing the means that we have in this way strengthens the feelings of **compassion, mercy, and kindness.**

Our beloved Prophet said:

"If you want to be softhearted, feed the poor, caress an orphan's head..."

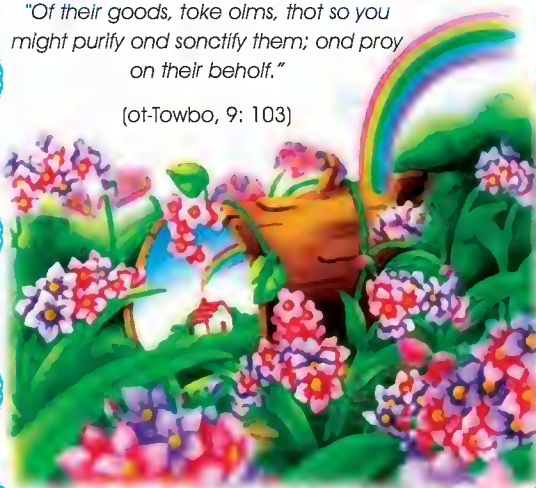
(Ahmed b Hambel, II, 263)

Allah the Exalted let us know that the needy and poor have a right to rich people's wealth when He said, *"And in their wealth and possessions (was remembered) the right of the (needy) him who asked, and him who (for some reason) was prevented (from asking)"* (Zorlyot, 51; 19) If we do not give their share to the rightful owners, we rob them of their rights. If we happen to have robbed seized others' rights, forbidden (haram) money is being mixed into our wealth. A wealth that is mixed with haram is impure. By giving the share of the poor and needy, we prevent haram from mixing in our wealth. **Thus, zakat purifies our wealth.**

Allah the Exalted says

"Of their goods, take olms, that so you might purify and sanctify them; and pray on their behalf."

(ot-Towbo, 9: 103)



Zakat and sadaqah control our love of material goods. It prevents us from using them in wrong ways. It teaches us that more money and wealth is not everything. It makes us experience the good feeling of sharing what we have with others. Zakat saves us from **stinginess and selfishness**. It makes us altruistic humans who are not selfish, who think of others, and spend his money for the happiness of other people.

Our beloved Prophet said:

"He who gives his zakat, who treats visitors well, and who succors those who face disaster saves himself from stinginess."

(Taberânî, Mu'cemu'l-Kebîr, IV, 256)

Zakat is a bridge that supplies the means of wealth to the poor. It makes communication between the poor and rich stronger. It eliminates jealousy. **It strengthens solidarity and love in our society**. The rich feel compassion and mercy towards the poor, and the poor show respect towards the rich. Solidarity, cooperation, and cohesion come alive in the society. Thus, zakat both meets the needs of the poor and also prevents possible social disturbances.

Our beloved Prophet said:

"Zakat is the bridge of Islam."

(Heysemî, Medjmu'z-zevâid, I, 480)

Zakat and charity (sodaqoh) **protect our wealth from trouble and evil**. A popular saying among Turkish people "a little sadaqah expels many troubles" expresses this reality. That is because receiving the good wishes of the poor and needy drives away troubles and evils. Allah's mercy and protection is lavished on those who give zakat and sodaqoh.

Our beloved Prophet said:

"Protect your wealth with zakat."

(Beyhâkî, Şuabu'l-Imân, V, 184)

Zakat ensures that our wealth stays abundant. In a verse, *"That which you lay out for increase through the property of (other) people, will have no increase with Allah, but that which you lay out for charity, seeking the Countenance of Allah, (will increase): It is these who will get a recompense multiplied."* (Rum, 30; 39) Allah the Exalted lets us know that the wealth of those who give zakat and sadaqah for His sake will increase. In the foundation of this increase, there are the good wishes of angels and of those happy souls who receive zakat and sadaqah. The good wishes of the poor, destitute, and angels are the source of peace for the rich.

Our beloved Prophet said:

"Every morning, two angels come to earth. One of them prays, 'My Lord! Restore the wealth of those who spend it for the right cause!' The other one says: 'My Lord! Destroy the wealth of those who are stingy!'"

(Muslim, Zakat, 57)



THERE IS SOMEONE ELSE WHO GIVES MORE!

During the caliphate of His Excellency Abu Bokir, a drought occurred in Medina. People could not find wheat to make bread with. The merchants of Medina who saw this situation invested all their money to the trade of wheat.

In the meantime, his Excellency Uthman had sent a trade caravan to Damascus and had brought wheat to Medina carried by a hundred camels. The wheat that His Excellency Uthman had brought would be sufficient to supply most of the wheat needs of the people. That is because, at that time, Medina was not that populated.

Some traders talked to H.E. Uthman right away. They wanted to purchase the wheat that he brought from Damascus. They were offering four dirhams per unit of wheat. However, H.E. Uthman found this value not enough. "There is someone who gives more!" he said. He did not want to sell his wheat to anyone. In this case, the merchants made better offers. However, in return they received the same answer from H.E. Uthman: "There is someone who gives more!" At last, they offered to give seven dirhams per unit of wheat. This was the maximum price that they could offer. However, H.E. Uthman was

Allah the Exalted says:

"Those who spend (freely), whether in prosperity or in adversity..."

All 'Imran, 3: 134]

Allah the Exalted says:

"The parable of those who spend their substance in the way of Allah is that of a grain of corn: it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allah gives manifold increase to whom He pleases: And Allah cares for all and He knows all things."

al-Baqara, 2: 261]

saying nothing else but "There is someone else who gives more."



Some of the merchants thought that his behavior showed that he was trying to take advantage of the situation and earn lots of money. They reproached his way of acting while people were in need.

Finally, they decided to tell this to the Caliph H.E. Abu Bakir. They were planning to ask the caliph to find a way to compromise with H.E. Uthman.

They told exactly what happened to the Caliph. H.E. Abu Bakir listened until the end and said:

"There is something weird in this. I think that you did not understand what H.E. Uthman meant. He is the son-in-law of the Messenger of Allah and his friend in paradise. He is not the kind of person who would take advantage of people's need and make profit out of it. There must be a good reason why he is acting this way. Let's go together and learn what he means from himself."

They went to H.E. Uthman together. H.E. Abu Bakir asked H.E. Uthman why he did not sell his wheat at the offered price.

H.E. Uthman's answer to this question was meaningful and thought-provoking:

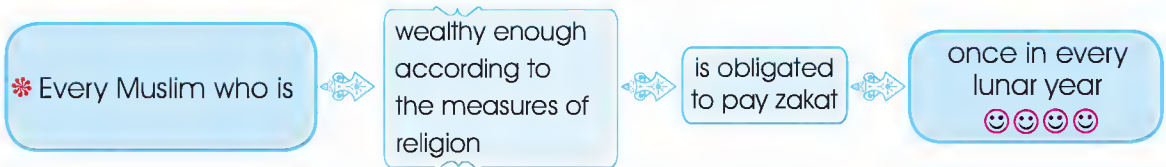
"O Caliph of the Messenger of Allah! They want to purchase one unit of my wheat for seven dirhams. In other words, they give seven for one. I want to sell it to someone who gives seven hundred for one. Doesn't Allah the Exalted promise to give up to seven hundred divine rewards for one good deed? While there is this profitable trade why should I sell my wheat to them?"

Upon this answer the merchants got lost in thought. They realized the mistake they did by assuming evil about him.

H.E. Uthman gave all the wheat carried with a hundred camels to the people of Medina as a sadaqah. He made the poor and the needy happy. Thus, the drought in Medina was mostly resolved.



Who are obligated to pay the Zakat?



What is the measure of being wealthy in Islam?

A person who has a zakat-payable minimum amount of wealth (nisab) apart from his basic needs is considered rich in Islam.

The amount of nisab is the minimum level of being rich in Islam. However, in order for zakat to be obligatory (fard), this amount of wealth has to be owned for at least one lunar year (354 days.)




What are the essential (basic) needs?

The following items if they are not for trade are regarded as essential needs:

- House,
- Household items,
- Clothes,
- Vehicle,
- Books,
- Tools that are needed for the job,
- Savings that is enough for the family's one-year-long expenditures



The Amount of Nisab [zakat-payable amount] and the Amount of Zakat

-  Those who are rich according to the measures of Islam and who maintains this amount of wealth for a lunar year or more must pay zakat.
-  The amount of nisab is calculated after taking out the essential needs.
-  The amount of nisab and zakat change depending on the kind of good.

The Amount of Nisab and Zakat for Commercial Merchandise

The Type of Good	The Amount of Nisab	The Amount of Zakat
Gold	80,18 grams (20 Miskals)	ONE FORTIETH (2.5 %)
Silver	561 grams (200 Dirhams)	
Trade Goods	Amount that is equal to the value of 80,18 grams of gold	
Cash	Amount that is equal to the value of 96 grams of gold	

-  There is no requirement of zakat from women's gold and silver ornaments, if their total value is less than the value of 80,18 grams of gold.





The Amount of Nisab and Zakat for Animals


The amount of zakat in animals changes depending on the kind and number of the animal:

- * **Sheep and goat:** For sheep and goat ranging from 40 to 120 (inclusively), the amount of zakat to give is either a one-year-old sheep or a two-year-old goat.



 The zakat amount of sheep, goat, cattle, and camel more than the amount listed above can be learned from books of basic jurisprudence.

 In order to be subject to zakat payment animals have to be grazed on open range pasturage for more than half of the year. There is no zakat on work animals, for example, those trained to plow or carry loads.

 Animals' zakat must be paid as animal. It is not permissible to pay their monetary value as zakat.

- * **Cattle:** For cattle ranging from 30 to 39 (inclusively), the amount of zakat is a two-year-old calf.

- * **Camel:** For camel ranging from 5 to 9 (inclusively), the amount of zakat is either one sheep or one goat.





The Amount of Nisab and Zakat on Crops

➤ The zakat of agricultural goods is also called "ushur" or tithe (one-tenth).

❖ The nisab for crops is about 610 kilograms of net dried weight, free of husks or chaff.

❖ The zakat for crops that have been watered without effort, as by rain and the like, is 10 percent of the crop.

❖ The zakat for crops that have been watered with effort is 5 percent of the crop.

✍ There is no zakat on grains or legumes except the staple types that people cultivate, dry, and store, such as wheat, barley, millet, rice, lentils, chickpeas, etc.

✍ For agricultural goods, it is not required to wait for one lunar year. After the crop is harvested, its zakat should be given.

✍ Zakat for crops must be given as crops. It is not permissible to pay their value as zakat.

"When someone sows, his barn becomes empty of seed, but when the harvest time comes, think about how many times more he gets from his field than the seeds he sowed.

How many barns he gets in return for the one barn he emptied.

if he leaves the seed in the barn and saves it up, instead of sowing, weevils and mice and calamities of time and decay devour it.

(Jalaladdin Rumi, Mathnawi, I, 2239-2240)

THE RUINED GARDEN

There was a generous man with vineyards and date gardens. This man who used to practice the religion used to give zakat at harvest time. After his death, his children were bequeathed these nice plot. His children were carried away by worldly goods and became stingy.

As a matter of fact, giving zakat generously in their father's time and receiving the good prayers of the poor used to keep the vineyards bountiful. The poor and destitute used to benefit from the plots. However, the zakat that their father used to distribute seemed a lot to the children and they did not want to give it. They thought that giving zakat would diminish their wealth. They did not realize where the fertility of the plots that Allah has given was coming from. That is because the negligence and materialism blinded their hearts.

They found excuses not to give zakat:

They said: "Our family is crowded, but our wealth is not a lot. Let's not give anything to the poor. Let's go early in morning to our garden and harvest before the poor come!"

When they said this, they neither thought about Allah, the real owner of their wealth, nor the right of the poor in their wealth...

For this reason, while they were sleeping, a disaster happened by Allah's command. A fire arose from the valley where the plot was located and burned down the whole yard.

In the morning, not knowing what had happened, they called each other happily:

— Come on, if you want to harvest the fruits, you must hurry!

They set off on their journey. On the way they were whispering to each other as:

— Mind you! Let no pauper come near us today. Let's not give them opportunity to come into our plot.

However, they were shocked when they arrived at the yard. They could not believe their eyes. They said: "Are we at the right place?" They looked around. It was their plot, but the plot was not the same. Everything had turned black as coal.

The most foreseeing one of them realized the situation quickly and said:

— No, No! We did not come to the wrong place; this is our plot. Since we were drawn to this world and decided not to help the poor, Allah the Exalted gave us this trouble, He burned down our plot with this disaster.

They all turned pale from sorrow and grief. What they had planned at night and what they faced in the morning! Upon this, they started to argue and accuse each other by saying "you gave us that bad idea." The foreseeing ones advised the others:

My brothers! There is no benefit in accusing each other like this. Let's ask Allah to forgive us. He might show mercy and forgive us.

By then, they had understood their mistake. Allah is the real owner of our possessions. They should have used the wealth Allah gave them as Allah willed. The wealth that is spent for Allah's sake becomes abundant and makes us earn paradise.

At the end they repented and said:

— Shame on us! We truly made a big mistake. It is entirely our fault. Our Lord, on the other hand, is free from all shortcomings. Therefore, let's not lose hope but face our Lord. Our Exalted Lord took our plot due to our mistake, but if He sees that we are sincerely sorry for what we have done, He might give us something better. We ask for our Lord's benediction and turn to Him.

(For the related verses in Quran see
al-Kalam, 68: 17-33)



TO WHOM ZAKAT CAN BE GIVEN?

People to whom zakat can be given are:

☞ **The Poor:**

someone who does not have enough to suffice himself or someone whose possessions do not satisfy even half of his needs like food and clothes.

Allah the Exalted says:

"And in their wealth and possessions (was remembered) the right of the (needy,) him who asked, and him who (for some reason) was prevented (from asking)."

az-Zariyat, 51: 19)

☞ **The Needy:**

Someone who has some possession which is enough to satisfy for more than half of his needs but not enough to satisfy his entire needs. These can be called those who are short of money. In other words they have some money but not enough.

☞ **Those in Debt:**

These are the people who could not pay up their debts with the money they have in hand. It is permissible to give them zakat as much as to pay up their debts. However, they should have been in debt for lawful reasons.

☞ **Wayfarers:**

They are the travellers who have money in their hometown but are left without money on their way and need others' help. They can be given zakat enough to go back to their hometown. However, for those people it is better to borrow money rather than taking zakat.

☞ **Those fight for the sake of Allah:** These are the ones who would like to fight for the sake of Allah but cannot because they are in need of food, weaponry, and other necessary equipment. Zakat can be given to those to supply their needs. In the same manner, zakat can be given to those who want to spread the religion of Allah and who acquire knowledge and study for this cause.

❁ In the 60th verse of the 9th Surah called At-Tawbah, the list of those to whom zakat can be given includes three more classes apart from the five listed above: slaves, those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to Truth), and those employed to administer the zakat (funds). Therefore, according to this verse, the list of those whom zakat can be given consists of eight groups

❁ As one can give zakat to any single one of these groups, one also can distribute the zakat between some or all of them.

❁ When giving zakat, starting with the closest relatives brings higher divine rewards.

Allah the Exalted says:

"The alms are only for the poor and the needy, and those who collect them, and those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and to free the captives and the debtors, and for the cause of Allah, and for the wayfarers; a duty imposed by Allah. Allah is knower, Wise."

al-Baqara, 2:110

TO WHOM ZAKAT CANNOT BE GIVEN?

Zakat cannot be given to



- ⊗ the wealthy,
- ⊗ non-Muslims,
- ⊗ dependents (mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, children, and grandchildren),
- ⊗ to institutions like schools, hospitals, mosques, to build fountains, bridges etc.

✍ Women can give their zakat to their poor husbands and children. Because, she is not responsible for their livelihood.

✓ One can give zakat to other relatives like paternal and maternal uncles, aunts, and nieces.



GIVING FROM THE THINGS THAT WE LIKE

Abu Talha was one of our Prophet's most beloved friends and one of Medina's rich elite. He had lots of fields, gardens, vineyards, and cattle. He also had a big and valuable garden near the Masjid Al Nabawi, and it was the most valuable of his gardens. Abu Talha used to love very much this date garden in which there was a sweet-water well. He used to frequently invite our prophet and his friends to his garden and serve them. There used to be nice conversations in the shade of the date trees.

One day our Prophet was having a conversation with his Companions in the masjid. He recited the following verse during the conversation:

"By no means shall you attain righteousness unless you give (freely) of that which you love; and whatever you give, of a truth Allah knows it well." (Al-Imran, 3: 92)

When Abu Talha heard this noble verse he was deeply affected and he said to our Prophet:

— O Messenger of Allah! The garden across the masjid is the most valuable and most

beloved part of my wealth to me. At this point onwards, I am giving this garden for the sake of Allah to the needy. Let poor Muslims benefit from the fruits and water of that garden.

Afterwards, Abu Talha went to the date garden to implement his nice decision. When he arrived at the garden he saw his wife Ummu Suleym sitting in the shade of one of the trees. He asked her to leave the garden. Ummu Suleym asked:

— Abu Talha! Why are we leaving the garden? Are we going somewhere? Abu Talha responded:

— Na, we're not going anywhere. This garden is no longer ours; it belongs to the poor of Medina.

Then, he told the event in the masjid. Upon this Ummu Suleym asked:

— Did you donate it on behalf of both of us or just yourself? Abu Talha responded:

— On behalf of both of us. Then, Ummu Suleym said:

— May Allah be pleased with you, Abu Talha. I used to think the same as I saw the poor around us, but I hesitated to tell you. May Allah accept our charity.



Caliph Umar bin Abdulaziz used to buy bags of candy and distribute them to the poor. It was asked to Umar;

- "Would it not be better to give money instead of distributing candies?"

Umar bin Abdulaziz replied:

- "I love sweets therefore I wanted to donate what I like most."



TO WHAT SHOULD WE PAY ATTENTION WHEN GIVING ZAKAT?

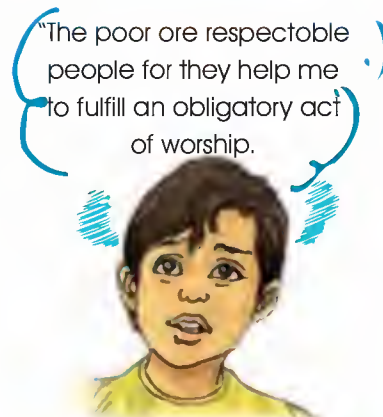
We should be compassionate when giving zakat

While giving zokot ond sodoqoh we should give with compassion and mercy and Imagine ourselves in the plcoe of the poor with the feeling that we could be one of them.



When giving our zakat, we should not forget that we are performing an act of worship

When giving our zakat and sadaqah, we should not forget that we ore fulfilling one of Allah's commands, i.e. we are performing an oct of worship. For this reoson, we should be thankful and feel respect towards the poor who enoble us to fulfill such on oct of worship.



We should be polite when giving our zakat

We should not forget that we are giving our zakat and sadoqahs to obtain the divine good pleasure. Just as we pay attention to the package and being kind when giving a gift or returning a trust, we should also give zakat and sadoqah in the same manner. We should not refrain from smiling or showing a nice gesture to the people to whom we give zakat.

We should not expect anything other than the desire to please Allah. When giving our zakat, we should not offend the person receiving the zakat by saying "This is my zakat" because what's important is that the donation reaches the poor. It is not important whether the person receiving the donation knows it is zakat or not.



"When receiving a gift, I would like it to be given to me with a smiling face and a nice package."



Allah the Almighty says:

"O you who believe! Cancel not your charity by reminders of your generosity or by injury, like those who spend their substance to be seen of men, but believe neither in Allah nor in the Last Day."

(al-Baqara, 2: 264)

When receiving a gift, I would like it to be given to me with a smiling face and in a nice package

For our zakat to be valid, we need to search well the people we are giving to. What's important is not that the goods leave our hands, but that they reach the appropriate destination. This is because what's essential in zakat is to give it to a deserving person. If it is given to someone without researching them, that zakat needs to be given again.

We should especially try to find people who are shy to say that they are in need. We should not forget that they are the real poor, so we should have our zakat reach the appropriate place.

"How can I find the real poor?"



Our beloved Prophet says

The poor person is not the one who goes round the people and ask them for a mouthful or two (of meals) or a date or two but the poor is that who has not enough (money) to satisfy his needs and whose condition is not known to others, that others may give him something in charity, and who does not beg of people."

(Bukhari, Zakat, 53)

TO MAKE A LIVING BY MANUAL LABOR IS BETTER THAN BEGGING



The Prophet did not like people begging and used to say: *"No doubt, it is better for a person to take a rope and proceed in the morning to the mountains and cut the wood and then sell it, and eat from this income and give alms from it than to ask others for something."*

(Bukhari, Zakat, 54)



Our beloved Prophet said:

"Giving hand is superior to the receiving hand."

(Bukhari, Zakat, 18)



A person came to our Prophet and asked for sadaqah. Our Prophet asked:

— "Do you have something at home?" The man said:

— "Yes, we have a spread, I sleep on half of it, and cover myself with the other half. Other than this, I also have a cup that I drink from." Our Prophet said:

— "Come on, get up and bring these." The man got up and brought his goods. Our Prophet held them up and asked:

— "Is there anyone who will buy these?" A man responded:

— "I can buy them for one dirham." Our Prophet said two or three times:

— "Is there no one giving more?"

When someone said, "I can buy them for two dirhams," our Prophet sold them to that person for two dirhams and said:

— "With one dirham buy food for your kids, with the other buy a rope and earn your living by collecting and selling wood."

The man did as our Prophet said, and came back fifteen days later saying that he earned 10 dirhams, and bought with some of it clothes and food. Upon this our Prophet said:

— "Is it better to live like this (by earning a living by manual labor) or to face Allah on the Day of Judgment with the stamp of beggarship?"

(Abu Dawud, Zakat, 26)

THE GENEROSITY AND ALTRUISM OF OUR MASTER THE PROPHET

Altruism, to take care of people's needs and watch over the poor, was one of the most important characteristics of our Prophet. Whosoever had trouble used to run to our Prophet and tell him his problem. In turn, he used to try to fulfill everyone's wishes and would never let people who asked him for something return empty-handed. He never used to say "No" or "I don't have it." He used to give even though he could only give a little. When he had nothing to give he used to be nice to poor and console them.

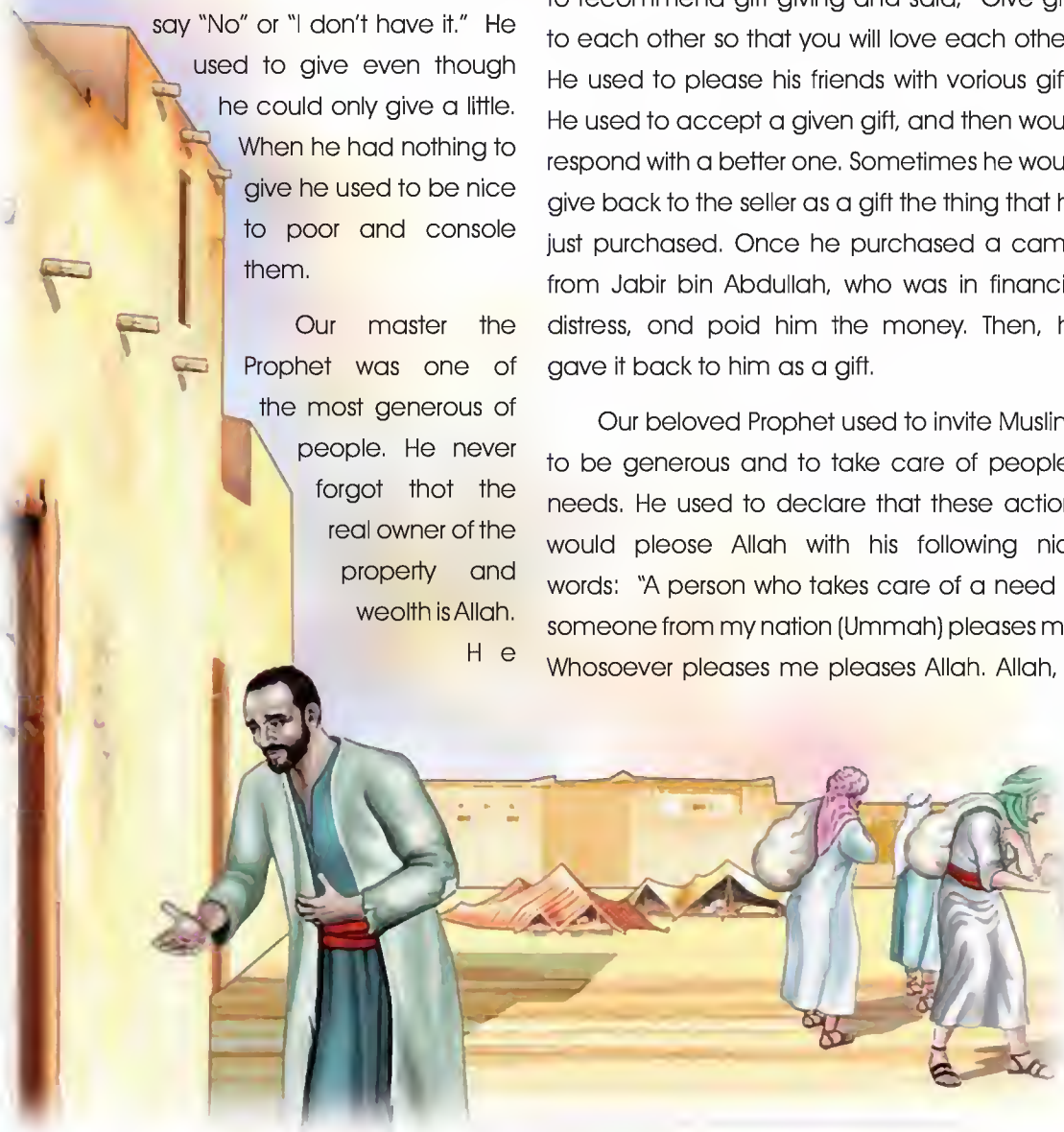
Our master the Prophet was one of the most generous of people. He never forgot that the real owner of the property and wealth is Allah.

H e

used to think of the poor and needy more than himself and feed the hungry. He used to help out those asking to borrow, and he sometimes used to give up his own possessions.

One of the requirements of being generous is to give gifts to people we love and make them happy. Our master the Messenger of Allah used to recommend gift giving and said, "Give gifts to each other so that you will love each other." He used to please his friends with various gifts. He used to accept a given gift, and then would respond with a better one. Sometimes he would give back to the seller as a gift the thing that he just purchased. Once he purchased a camel from Jabir bin Abdullah, who was in financial distress, and paid him the money. Then, he gave it back to him as a gift.

Our beloved Prophet used to invite Muslims to be generous and to take care of people's needs. He used to declare that these actions would please Allah with his following nice words: "A person who takes care of a need of someone from my nation (Ummah) pleases me. Whosoever pleases me pleases Allah. Allah, in



turn, places in Paradise the person with whom he is pleased with."

He used to give the good news that people who donate would earn the happiness in this world and the hereafter and that the stingy people would be unhappy. Adding that generosity would make a person closer to Allah, paradise, and people he used to add:

"A generous person is close to Allah, to Paradise, to people. The stingy ones are far from Allah, from Paradise, from people and close to Hell."

This was how the generosity of our beloved Prophet was, whose heart was filled with the love of humans, compassion, and altruism, and it also lasted like this for his lifetime.



"One should (positively) covet only two kinds of people: One, a person who spends the wealth that Allah gave him in the true path, the other, a person who appropriately judges with the knowledge that Allah gave him and teaches it to others."

(Bukhari, Ilm 15)



One day, one of the Muslim ladies gave as a gift a shirt that she knit with her own hands. Our Prophet, who needed such a shirt took it and went home. After wearing it, he came back to the masjid. One of his Companions liked the shirt a lot and being encouraged by Our Master the Prophet's generosity he said:

— "O Messenger of Allah! What a nice shirt this is! Would you give it as a gift to me?"

Even though he had no other sweaters, our beloved Prophet did not deny his friend's wish and he took off and gave him the shirt immediately as a gift.

His friends of the companion who asked his shirt from our Prophet said to him:

"Why did you ask for that shirt? In fact, the Messenger of Allah (upon him blessings and peace) needed that shirt. Didn't you know that he would never refuse anyone who asks for something?" He responded:

— "I did not ask for this shirt to wear it, I asked it to make it my shroud."

When this companion passed away he was shrouded with this shirt that our Prophet gave.

(Bukhari, Adab, 39; Janaiz, 29)



EIGHT HEAVENS ARE READY



You are also in need of mercy, O my friend,
Do not be a thorn in the rose branch, be dew!
Whoever you see wing-braken,
Be his balm without hurting his wound!

There are hands that could not hold a dry handkerchief,
There are tongues that could not tell their troubles,
There are many subjects who are both poor and incapable,
Go be the generous one who makes them happy!

Be conscious and saful to the orphan,
Help the one who was left in the hillside reach the plain,
To the face being roasted in the deserts of nothingness,
Be a gentle breeze with your existence!

The world is such that it is full of destitutes,
Some of them have no clothes, nor money,
This one has no leg, that one has no arm,
Be compassionate of heart, be a generous son of Adam!

Whoever drinks the poison of stinginess,
The destitute's "Ah" river draws him,
Go around each corner of the village and city,
Be Zamzam to the hungry, the thirsty!

You must persist in doing good deeds my friend,
Even though some will not understand,
The Creator is enough for you as confident,
The eight heavens are ready, you just be generous!

Both the poor and the rich are the same in the eyes of Allah,
Neither caveat nor scorn, this is the command of Allah,
Allah pleases those who are benevolent,
You also SEYRI, be a confident to this love!

Muhammed Ali Esmeli

QUESTIONS

Let's Check Our Knowledge

Match the following sentences.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Those who own wealth as much as nisab | <input type="checkbox"/> two meals of a middle income person or the corresponding monetary amount. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> We give one-fortieth of gold or silver | <input type="checkbox"/> to recipients ordered by our religion is called "zakat." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A person can't give zakat | <input type="checkbox"/> is superior to the receiving hand. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> While giving zakat, | <input type="checkbox"/> in other words, 2.5% of it as zakat. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To institutions such as mosques, schools, hospitals | <input type="checkbox"/> is 80.18 grams. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zakat serves as a bridge that | <input type="checkbox"/> to his grandsons. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A rich Muslim's donation of some his wealth | <input type="checkbox"/> and to build roads, fountains, and bridges, zakat cannot be given. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Giving hand | <input type="checkbox"/> we should not forget that we are performing an act of worship. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The amount of nisab for gold | <input type="checkbox"/> carries the means of rich to the poor. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The minimum amount for zakat al-fitr is | <input type="checkbox"/> are considered rich according to the religion. |

Let's Test Our Knowledge

- To which one of the following zakat can't be given?**
 - To wayfarers
 - To the poor
 - To those in debt
 - To parents
- What is the common characteristic of the acts of worship like zakat, sadaqah, sacrifice, and fitr?**
 - Altruism and solidarity
 - Righteousness and justice
 - Hard work and happiness
 - Patience and abundance

3. Which one of the items below is not among the essential (basic) needs?

- a) House
- b) Car
- c) Trade goods
- d) Equipment for arts and work

4. What is the amount of nisab for sheep and goat?

- a) 40 b) 30
- c) 20 d) 100

5. What is the ruling on giving zakat al-fitr?

- a) Mubah b) Fard
- c) Sunnah d) Mustahab

6. Which one of the statements below is wrong?

- a) Zakat purifies from the extreme love of material goods and stinginess.
- b) Zakat causes the wealth to be blessed and abundant and to increase.
- c) Zakat increases people's love and closeness.
- d) Zakat makes the rich richer and the poor poorer.

7. From which of the below zakat cannot be given?

- a) Cash b) Sheep
- c) Household items d) Cows

8. Which one of the below cannot be said about zakat?

- a) Zakat is obligatory upon the rich
- b) Zakat is given once a year
- c) One fortieth of wealth is given as zakat.
- d) Sick people do not give zakat.

Fill in the blanks

Fill in the blanks with the words in the parenthesis.

(In the wealth / seed / does not beg / purifies / your heart)

- ❁ "The real poor is the person who does not have enough materials for himself, who is not given sadaqah even though it is known that he is in need and who from anyone."
- ❁ ".....of rich Muslims there is a right for the poor who want or does not want it."
- ❁ "The problem of those who give charity in the way of Allah are like that of a that generates seven ears of grain in which there are 700 seeds."
- ❁ "If you want to soften, then feed the hungry, caress the head of an orphan."
- ❁ "Take zakat from the wealth of wealthy. Zakattheir wealth and purifies them from sins"



I AM LEARNING MY PROPHET



SIRAH



- ❁ *The Battle Of Uhud (Ce 625)*
- ❁ *The Raji Incident And The Disaster Of The Well Of Maunah (Ce 625)*
- ❁ *Alcohol And Gambling: The Dealings Of The Devil*
- ❁ *The Young Man Who Searched The Trail Of The Final Messenger*
- ❁ *The Cloth Protecting From Disgrace And Sin*
- ❁ *Battle Of The Trench (Battle Of Handaq) (627 Ce)*
- ❁ *Hudaybiyyah Truce (Ce 628)*
- ❁ *Sending Delegates And Letters Of Invitation To Islam (Ce 629-628)*
- ❁ *The Conquest Of Khaibar (Ce 628),*
- ❁ *Years Later The Visit To Ka'bah (Ce 629)*
- ❁ *Battle Of Mubah (Ce 629)*

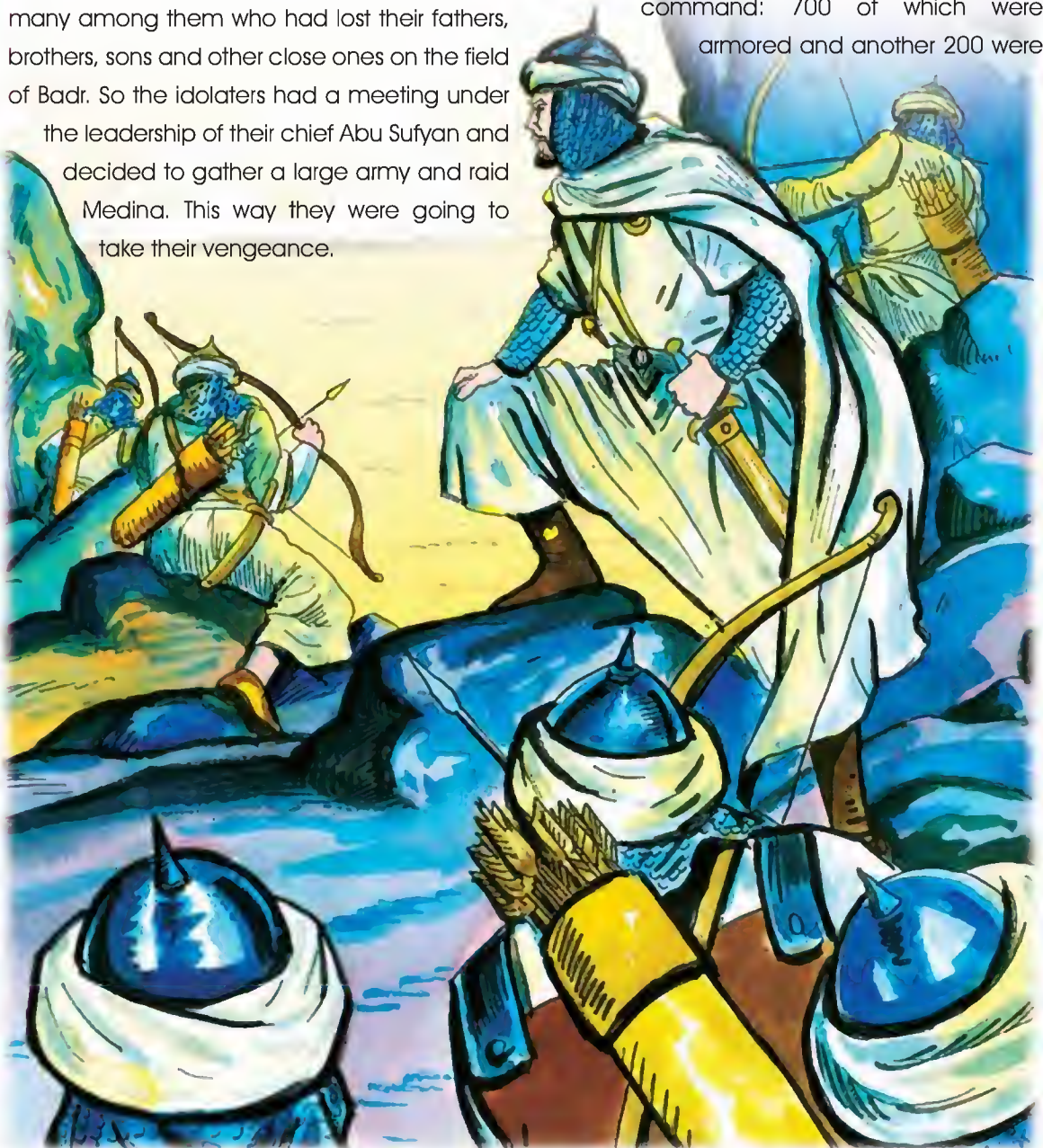


1- THE BATTLE OF UHUD (CE 625)

a) Idolaters (Mushriks) Burning with the Desire for Vengeance

The idolaters had lost 70 men in the Battle of Badr. Among them were the notables of Quraysh including Abu Jahl, Uqabah, Utbah, Shaybah and Umayyah. This was why they could not forget the loss at Badr and were burning with the desire for vengeance. There were many among them who had lost their fathers, brothers, sons and other close ones on the field of Badr. So the idolaters had a meeting under the leadership of their chief Abu Sufyan and decided to gather a large army and raid Medina. This way they were going to take their vengeance.

Some idolaters, who were burnin with the fire of revenge, stirred the Meccan people by reciting poems and eulogies in memory of those slain at Badr. In return for money, they were able to recruit 2000 mercenaries from the surrounding tribes of Mecca. Together with 1000 Meccans, Abu Sufyan was marching towards Medina with a total of 3000 soldiers under his command: 700 of which were armored and another 200 were



cavaliers. The army had also 300 camels, an abundant supply of wine and women to sing and dance in their post-victory celebrations. They were certain that they were going to be victorious. Even wives of some Meccan notables had joined the campaign; most notably Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyan.

b) As The Enemy was Approaching

Companions sent for inspection soon returned with the news that the idolaters had come very close to Medina. The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) used to discuss matters which were not clarified by Divine Revelation with his Companions. In this matter he followed the same method. Gathering his Companions, he asked:

— Should we confront the enemy outside of Medina or take defensive measures in Medina? He was of the opinion that it would be better to fight a defensive battle without leaving Medina. Leading Companions like Abu Bakr and Sa'd ibn Mu'adh (r. anhum) were of the same opinion. But most of the Companions, especially the youngsters who were absent at Badr and Hamza (r. anhum) insisted:

— We have been waiting for this day to come... Let's fight with the enemy on the field outside of Medina! The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) went with the opinion of the majority. Wearing two armors on top of one another and a helmet, he stepped outside his home. Meanwhile, those who had insisted to fight outside of Medina realized their error of going against wishes of the Blessed Prophet (pbuh) and changed their minds. They said:

- We were mistaken, O Messenger of Allah. We cannot go against your opinion. Please, do as you wish!

But the Blessed Prophet (pbuh) said:

— A prophet never removes his armor after having worn it without fighting. If you stay patient and do your task, the victory, Allah-willing, will be ours.

The army of idolaters set up their base on the skirts of Mount Uhud, around 5 km north of Medina. The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) left Abdullah ibn Maq'um (r.a.) in charge of Medina. After offering the Friday prayer, he then set out of Medina with 1000 men. He spent the night at a place close to Uhud. On the next day with dawn, he arrived at Uhud and chose the most suitable location for battle.

c) The Treachery of the Hypocrites (Munafiqs)

Something entirely unexpected happened on the way. Abdullah ibn Ubayy made up an excuse saying that "...Muhammad did not listen to the elders like us but chose to go with the opinion of juveniles. I never wanted a field battle to begin with". So along with his 300 men, he abandoned the rest of the army. These were the hypocrites (munafiqs) whose identities had not been known by then. They appeared to be Muslim on the outside; yet in reality, they neither believed in the prophet nor the religion. The number of Muslims to face the army of 3000 idolaters was thus reduced to a mere 700. This meant that each Companion had to fight with four idolaters..

Do you think that the Muslims got afraid because their numbers were so little compared to the enemy? And why?

The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) situated the Muslim army facing their backs to Mount Uhud. On the Hill of Ainayn to his left, he placed 50 archers under the leadership of Abdullah ibn Jubayr (r.a.). He then strictly advised them to

— ...remain on the Hill whether we are victorious or defeated and do not leave your positions until you hear my permission to do so...for the enemy could detour around you through that valley and put us under siege. Use your bows and arrows and do not let them pass the valley.

The size of the army of Quraysh was four times larger than that of the Muslims. Moreover, 700 of them were armored and 200 were cavaliers. The Muslims, on the other hand, had only 100 armored soldiers and just 2 cavaliers. The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) had given the command of the right flank to Uqqasha and the left to Abu Maslama (r.a.).

The battle began with one-on-one duels between men from each side, as was the custom of the day. In those duels, a total of 9 idolaters were slain, one after another, by Muslims who faced them.

With the courageous onslaught of the brave Companions like Hamza, Ali, Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas and Abu Dujanah (r.anhum), the idolaters lost 20 more men at the beginning of the battle. The Meccans were suddenly defeated. Both their left and right flanks had begun to retreat; even the women banging on drums and urging the idolaters on fighting had begun fleeing towards the hills amid cries and screams. Crushed by the force of the strength of belief and

heroics of the believers, the greater number of men and equipment the idolaters had brought to the fight proved to have no use. They were now fleeing as fast as they possibly could.

d) The Archers who Breached the Prophet's Command

So the Muslims had been the clear victors of the first phase of the war. But they should have pursued the fleeing enemy to the very end. Instead, the Muslims chose to spread over the battlefield to collect the loot the idolaters (Mushriks) had left behind. Meanwhile, some of the archers watching these scenes from the Hill of Ainayn began saying,

— What are we still waiting for? The bottle is over; victory has been won. Let's go and collect the loot!"

Their commander Abdullah ibn Jubayr (r.a.) tried to stop them, saying,

— Have you forgotten the orders of the Messenger of Allah? We cannot leave our position until he allows us to do so!"

They did not listen to him. Only 8 archers remained with him while the rest were heading down the hill in pursuit of loot.



How would you have acted if you were an archer on the Hill of Ainayn that day?

.....

.....

Khalid ibn Walid, one of the commanders of the Meccan army, had tried forcing his way through the valley protected by the Muslim archers and go around the Muslim army to catch them off guard, but had failed to do so because the archers had protected the area so well. But after seeing the majority of the archers leave the hill, Khalid ibn Walid launched another assault with his cavalymen. Soon, they martyred Abdullah ibn Jubayr and the eight archers with him (r.anhum). He then attacked from behind the rest of the Muslim soldiers who were busy with collecting loot. The other idolaters, who were fleeing, saw that the battle had begun anew and launched an attack from the front. The Companions were suddenly caught under a fierce crossfire. Muslim's victory began to turn into a defeat in a matter of moments. Because the Muslims in a state of shock were spread across the battle field and separated from each other, they began to worry about their own lives.

**e) The Martyrdom of Our Prophet's
Uncle Hamza (r.a.)**

Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyan, who had lost her father Utbah, her brother Walid and her uncle Shaibah in the Battle of Badr, desperately

wanted to get revenge from Hamza (r.a.), who had killed his father in a duel. But she knew that there was nobody who could defeat the great and courageous Hamza face to face. So she promised Wahshi, the skilled lancer, his freedom and expensive gifts, if he were to be successful in martyring Hamza. During the Battle of Uhud, Wahshi could not find the courage to face up to Hamza. He hid behind a large rock and waited for Hamza to come past in front of him. Hamza, meanwhile, was running to and fro on the battlefield, taking with his sword every idolater (mushrik) down who crossed paths with him. For a moment, he came and stood right in front of Wahshi, with his back turned to him. Wahshi did not let the opportunity slip. He deftly threw the short spear from over the top of the rock he was hiding behind. The spear pierced through Hamza's groin. And a short time later, Hamza (r.a.) was lying on the field martyred (shahid).

The martyrdom of Hamza (r.a.) during the most heated stages of the battle was a huge loss for the believers. Companions were being martyred one by one. A number of courageous believers who had grouped around the Blessed Prophet (pbuh) had also been martyred.



f) Were the Messenger of Allah martyred?

An idolater had martyred Musab ibn Umayr (r.a.), the flag-bearer of the Muslim army, thinking that he was the Blessed Prophet (pbuh). He then began to shout:

— I have killed Muhammad... I have killed Muhammad.

Echoing around the battlefield, these words sent panic through the Muslim ranks. Meanwhile, the Blessed Prophet (pbuh) had begun to call out from where he was:

— O Servants of Allah! I am here! Come and gather around me!

Yet, nobody was hearing him. Muslims had found themselves divided into three groups. Each group was unaware of the other.

The idolaters tried making the most out of the Muslims' state of confusion. They got to within an arms length of the Blessed Prophet (pbuh). A stone thrown by them cleaved his lips and broke his tooth. He was struck by the sword of Ibn Kamiah. Two rings that broke from his helmet pierced the Prophet's cheek and he got wounded in his face

What would you have done if you were next to the Blessed Prophet (pbuh) right then?

After a while, the Companions finally spotted the Blessed Prophet (pbuh) on the field. Immediately gathering around him, they began to fight back against the idolaters.

Soon, the idolaters began leaving the field of Uhud, thinking that the upper hand they had gained was enough. But before long, they regretted that decision and thought about turning back and raiding Medina; because even though they appeared to be victors, they had nothing to prove it: neither loot nor prisoners. To make the matter worse, the Muslims had still not left the battlefield.

The Muslims re-gathered. The wounded dressed their wounds and the martyrs (shahids) were offered their funeral prayers and buried. Nine martyrs at a time were brought next to the body of Hamza (r.a.), and buried after their funeral prayer, while Hamza (r.a.) remained for another nine to be brought. That way, the Blessed Prophet (pbuh) offered multiple funeral prayers for his beloved uncle who is also called the master of the martyrs.

When remembering the martyrs of Uhud later on, the Blessed Prophet (pbuh) would say in expressing their virtues:

— By Allah, how I would have wished to be a martyr and spend the night underneath the Mount of Uhud with my Companions.

After returning to Medina, the Blessed Prophet (pbuh) gathered his Companions and pursued the idolaters. At a place called Khamro ol-Asad, they lit 500 bonfires.

Learning that they were being pursued, the idolaters started to panic.

— The Muslims could not even move their fingers... How did this happen all of a sudden? they asked, staring empty at each other. It was not long before they began telling each other:

— Come on... Let's get out of here before something bad happens!

And then they quickly returned to Mecca.

2- THE RAJI INCIDENT AND THE DISASTER OF THE WELL OF MAUNAH (CE 625)

a) The Devoted Teachers of Islam

The idolaters had gained more courage after the Battle of Uhud. Muslims were unsafe in Medina. On the one hand, the Blessed Prophet (pbuh) was taking defensive precautions against a possible Meccan attack, while on the other hand he was making the most out of every given opportunity to promote Islam. He was sending teachers to nearby tribes who had accepted Islam, so that they could learn Islam and the Quran.

An envoy from the tribes of Adal and Qara came to the Blessed Prophet (pbuh). They asked from him Muslim teachers to be sent to their tribes to teach them Islam and the Quran. The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) sent them a group of ten Companions under the leadership of Asim bin Thabit (r.anhum). On the way, the teachers were ambushed by a gang of 100 men from the Tribe of Huzail, near a place called water of Raji between Usfan and Mecca. Eight of the teachers fought against the attackers to the very end and were martyred. The remaining





two, Zaid ibn Dasina and Hubaib ibn Adiyy, were taken prisoner by the Huzaylīs who sold them to the Meccans. Zaid was bought by Safwan ibn Umayya, who wanted to take revenge from him for killing his father during the Battle of Badr. Hubaib was also imprisoned and then executed. All the notables of Mecca

were present to watch the execution of both. Moments before he was executed, Abu Sufyan came up to Hubaib (r.a.) and asked:

— So tell me...Would you have liked the Prophet to be in your place in return for your life?

How do you think Hubaib answered that question?

Hubayb (r.a.) said, with unshakable courage:

— Never...! I could not even bear the thought of him being spiked by a thorn in his foot in Medina, let alone hoping him to be in my place right now!

Stunned by the response, Abu Sufyan could not help but confess,

— I swear, I have never seen another person who is loved by his friends more than Muhammad!

The response of Zaid (r.a.), who was promised freedom in return for abandoning Islam, was similar:

— Dying as a Muslim is a thousand times better than living as a traitor! He did not even blink an eye as they executed him.

The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) was deeply upset by what had happened to his Companions, martyred for the love of teaching Islam. He said:

— May Allah deal with the tyrants as He wills and left their revenge for the Almighty to take.

b) One Betrayal after Another

During the same days, Abu Bara, a notable of the region of Najd, came to Medina and asked the Blessed Prophet (pbuh) to send some Companions to teach them Islam. The pain of the Raji Incident was still fresh. The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) said to Abu Bara,

— I do not trust the people of Najd. I fear that something will happen to my teachers if I send them.

Abu Bara then promised him the security of the teachers. The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) then sent a group of seventy Companions with Abu Bara.

But when the envoy reached the Well of Maunah, they were horrifically betrayed. A large mob of deceitful Najdis martyred the entire envoy of Companions. Umayyah ibn Amr (r.a.) was the only one to survive the massacre.

The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) was terribly sad by these series of tragedies. The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) very much loved the Companions who got martyred. They had all been trained by the Prophet himself. Believers in Medina shed tears of grief. The hypocrites (munafiqs) and Jews, on the other hand, could hardly hide their joy.

The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) was more upset than he had ever been. After each dawn prayer for the following month, he prayed saying:

— O my Lord! Curse these tribes who have rebelled against Allah and His Messenger!

3- ALCOHOL AND GAMBLING: THE DEALINGS OF THE DEVIL

Then the following Qur'anic verse was revealed **"O you who believe! Do not go near prayer when you are intoxicated until you know (well) what you say..."** (an-Nisa, 4:43). After that, the number of drinkers among Muslims dropped. Before prayer, a Companion would call out: **"Those who are drunk should stay away from the prayer!"** Eventually, majority of Muslims gave up drinking. Many were feeling uncomfortable with the unwanted scenes that

would occasionally result because of drinking. Umar (r.a.) was even praying:

— My Lord...Send us a clear command regarding drinking!

Finally, a quarrel that erupted after a feast of alcoholic drinks made the hazards of drinking alcohol clear to everyone. The need for a ban on drinking was manifest.

What do you think the reasons why drinking alcohol was not banned at once could be?

And so it was prohibited by the following verse:

"O you who believe! Intoxicants and gambling, (dedication of) stones, and (divination by) arrows, are an abomination, of Satan's handwork: eschew such (abomination), that you may prosper. Satan's plan is (but) to excite enmity and hatred between you, with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah, and from prayer: will you not then abstain?" (al-Maida, 90-91)

The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) sent for Umar (r.a.) and recited to him the Revelation. When he came to reciting the part **"will you not then abstain...?"** Umar (r.o.) declared:

— O Allah! Yes, we will abstain; we will abstain! The exact words reverberated among the entire Companions.

Following this Revelation, with the order of the Blessed Prophet (pbuh), a Companion called out the news through the streets of Mecca saying that:

— From now on intoxicants are forbidden!

Through the streets of Medina was flowed the streams of wine pouring out from the broken earthenware and the punctured leather bottles that once contained the now forbidden beverage.

Muslims, who once consuming alcohol, willingly and respectfully submitted themselves to this command and destroyed all the stock of wine they had without any objection whatsoever and they never drank again.

The Blessed Prophet (pbuh) later said,

— Allah has surely cursed the drinker of alcohol, its provider, carrier, buyer and he who lives off its profit. (Ahmed, I, 53; II, 351; Nasai, Ashriba, 1-2; Hakim, II, 305)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) has also stated in another saying:

"Every intoxicant is impermissible. A little of something which intoxicates when it is consumed much is also impermissible." (Ibn Majah, Ashriba, 10; Nasai, Ashribah, 24, 48)

"Alcohol is the mother of all evil." (Ahmad, V, 238)

SHE WAS EMBARRASSED!

Ali (r.a.) recounts:

"Out of all the members of their family, the dearest to her father was Fatimah. Her hands would develop scars from spinning the grinder and her neck from carrying the waterskin. Sweeping around the house would moreover leave her in dust. Some slaves had been brought at one stage to the Blessed Prophet -upon him blessings and peace- .

— You should ask for a slave from your father, I suggested to her.

So Fatimah went, but seeing her father talking with some other people, she turned back. The next day, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) returned the visit. He asked

— What was it that you needed? Fatimah kept silent and did not answer.

— Let me explain, O Messenger of Allah... I then broke in and began to explain the matter.

— Fear Allah, Fatimah, and carry out what He has commanded! The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) then said:

— Attend to your family and before you go to sleep, say Subhanallah thirty-three times, Alhamdulillah thirty-three times and Allah-u Akbar thirty-four times; all of them add up to a hundred. This is better for you than a servant.

— I am pleased with Allah and His Messenger, said Fatimah. Thus the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) did not give her a servant." (Abu Dawud, Kharaj, 19-20/2988)



4- THE YOUNG MAN WHO SEARCHED THE TRAIL OF THE FINAL MESSENGER

Salman Farisi (r.a.), who was formerly a slave of a Medinan Jew, recounts to Ibn Abbas (r. anhumā) his provoking journey that culminated in his entering the blessed haven of Islam:

a) We Used to Worship Fire

- I used to live in Jayy, a village in Isfahan. My father was the richest man in our village. I was his only child. I was the most beloved one in his life. He loved me in excess; he would never leave me out of his sight. He would not even let me leave our house out of his fear something bad might happen to me.

My father believed in Zoroastrianism. In other words he worshipped to fire. He had taught me his beliefs. So great was I caught up in my father's beliefs that I had even

taken upon myself the duty of lighting and feeding the sacred fire at the temple. I would not allow the fire to smolder even for a moment.

My father also had a big farm. One day, as he was busy working on some construction, he said to me,

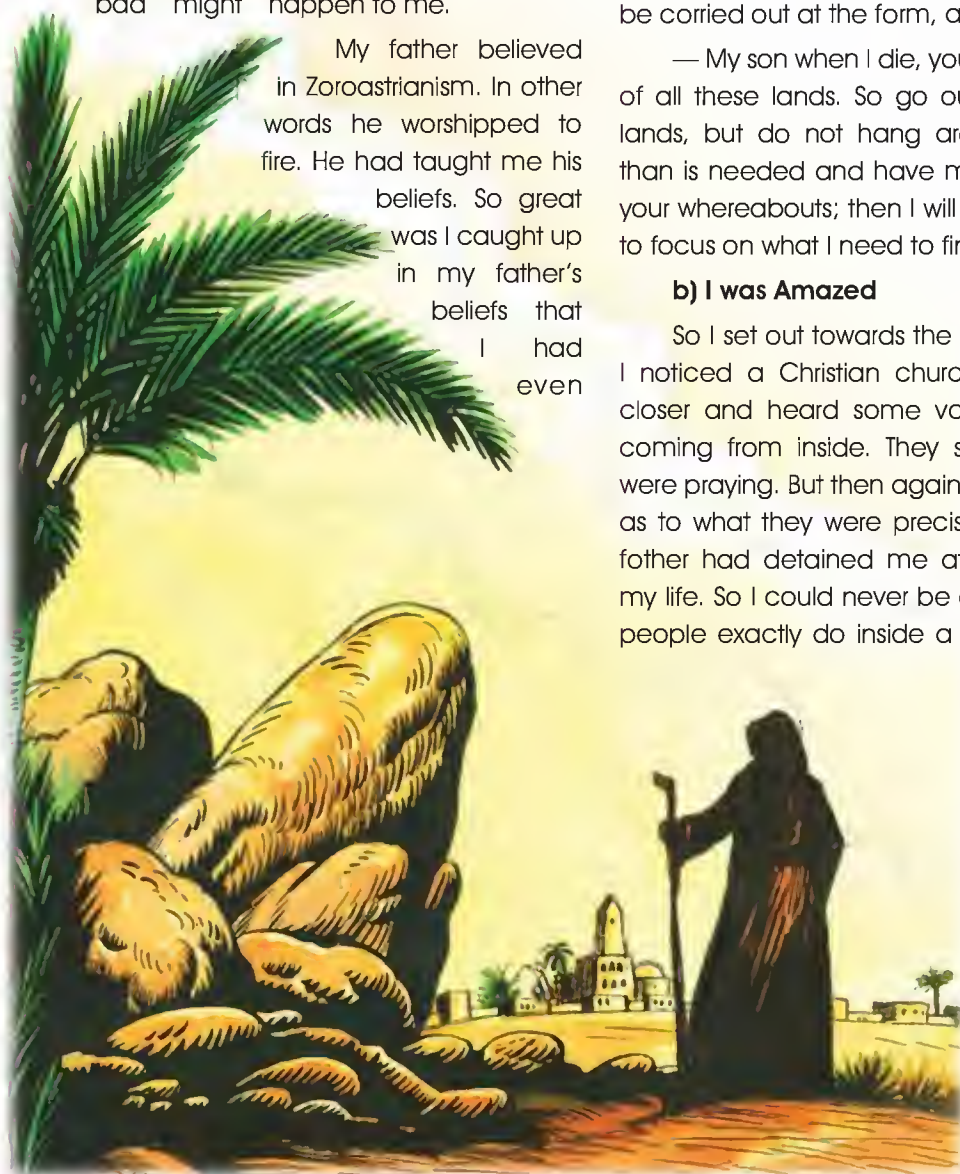
— Son, this work will keep me occupied all day, so I will not be able to go to the farm... best you go there today.

He then told me the things that needed to be carried out at the farm, adding,

— My son when I die, you will be the owner of all these lands. So go out and know your lands, but do not hang around there more than is needed and have me worrying about your whereabouts; then I will not even be able to focus on what I need to finish here!

b) I was Amazed

So I set out towards the farm. On the way, I noticed a Christian church. I approached closer and heard some voices of Christians coming from inside. They sounded like they were praying. But then again I was not too sure as to what they were precisely doing, for my father had detained me at home nearly all my life. So I could never be certain as to what people exactly do inside a church. Curious, I



entered the church to see for myself. I observed them for a while. At the end, I thought

— Surely, their religion seems better than ours.

I did not leave the church until sundown. As for the farm, I never ended up going there. Wanting to find out more, I asked them:

— Where could I find the most authentic form of your religion? They replied

— In Damascus. I continued:

— If I go there, would they accept me in this religion? They said:

— Of course. I asked:

— Is there anybody among you to go there soon? They said:

— A caravan will set out for Damascus in a couple of days.

The sun had completely set by the time I returned home to my father, who, I soon became aware, had put all work aside and

sent people to search for me. Upon seeing me, he exclaimed,

— Where were you? Did I not tell you what you were supposed to do?

— "Father! I had gone out to see our lands today, but I found a church and went inside. I saw certain people worshipping inside it" I began to explain. "I was very much taken by what they were doing... so much that I barely noticed the sun had set by the time I left them!"

— "There is nothing of benefit for you in their religion," he rebuked. "What you have with you, which has come from your forefathers, is way better!"

Worried I might run away to them, my father then put shackles around my feet and locked me up inside the house. But all I could think about was the caravan which was going to set out for a journey to Damascus in a couple of days.

Do you think Selman will go to Damascus? Why?

c) On the Road to Damascus

Nonetheless, through an acquaintance, I was able to send out a message to the men of the church, insisting them to "inform me as soon as the trade caravan gets ready for the trip to Damascus." A while afterwards I received the news that the Christian caravan heading to Damascus was ready. I was somehow able to free myself of the iron shackles and run to the church, where I joined the Damascus bound caravan. Sometime later, we reached Damascus.

There, I searched for the most knowledgeable scholar of the town. The locals directed me to a bishop in some church. I rushed to him the moment I found out. At the time, the bishop was outside the church.

— I want to convert to this religion, I implored him.

— I wish to remain with you, provide my services to the church, learn Christianity from you and worship by your side.

— Come inside! He said.

I entered the church with him. My days there had now begun. In time, I found out for myself that the Bishop of Damascus was not a good man as many had thought. He would command the church comers to give charity for the poor, only to stockpile what he collected. I even noticed, one day, that he had hoarded a total of seven pots of gold and silver in charity. My anger was growing by the day. But soon, the bishop wound up dead. The church comers gathered to offer his final services. That was when I came clean with all the bishop's misdemeanors.

— He was on evil mon, I told the onlookers.

— True, he used to encourage you to offer charity, but he always hoarded what you gave for his own pleasure and never gave even a dime to the poor!

— How do you know that? They asked suspiciously.

— I can show you where he kept his treasure hidden, I replied.

They took out exactly seven pots of gold and silver from the place I showed them.

— We will never bury him, we swear! They shouted fumingly. They were true to their promise: instead they threw his corpse into a pit and covered it with stones. In his place, they brought another scholar. He was different. To this day, except those who offer their five daily prayers, I do not remember ever seeing another person who had so little regard for the world, who desired the Hereafter and who worshipped day and night. Sometime later, he too was in his deathbed, breathing his last few breaths. I said to him,

— I have been with you all this time and have never loved anyone else as much as I have loved you. Now you see your time has come. What do you advise I do after you? Who shall I go to?

— I know of nobody who follows the same path as I, my dear, he whispered.

— The righteous have all but died. Those who are alive have distorted the eternal truths of religion and abandoned most of them. But come to think of it, there is a man in Mosul, on the same path as I. You better go to him.

After this venerable man passed away, I headed to Mosul and found his friend. He, too, then passed away, after which, at his request, I headed to Nusaybin and from there to Ammuriya (near city of Eskişehir in present day Turkey). There, I even acquired a little wealth as well in the form of some cows and sheep. But ultimately, death came knocking on the door of the man at Ammuriya, too. When I asked his advice, he said:

— Honestly, my dear, I cannot think of anyone on our path who I can recommend for you to go to after me... nobody who is on the same path as us. But the time of the Prophet of the Final Hour is near; I can sense his shade hovering above us. That prophet will be sent on the religion of Ibrahim (pbuh). He shall appear in the land of the Arabs and migrate to a town, with date fields, wedged amid two stony places. He will accept gifts but will not touch charity. He will carry the seal of prophethood between his shoulder blades. If you have the means to go those lands now, go; do not wait for a moment!

d) On the Trail of the Final Messenger

Ultimately, he too passed away. The Will of Allah had me remain there for a little while longer. I then met some merchants from the Clan of Kolb. I offered them my sheep and cows on the condition they take me with them to Arabia. They accepted and took me with them. But after we reached The Qura Valley, they betrayed me and sold me as slave to a Jew. I was made to remain with the Jew for a while. The Qura Valley was abundant with date trees, so I could not help but wonder whether I had arrived, after all, at the town which my master had described as the place of migration of the Prophet of the Final Hour. Yet, even though I had built up a glimmer of hope, my heart was never fully convinced.

Once, during my stay at the Qura Valley, the cousin of the Jew, who was from the tribe of Banu Qurayza, purchased me and took me with him to Medina. By Allah, the moment I saw Medina I just knew, there and then, this was the town described by my master at Ammuriya. My heart now appeased, I began to wait for the Prophet of the Final Hour. Little was I aware at the time that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) had long appeared and remained for years in Mecca. Engrossed in the duties that came with being a slave, however, I had not heard

anything in relation. I started to patiently and hopefully wait for the time that I meet with him.

e) News of the Final Messenger

One day, I was up a date tree, working on it, and my master was sitting under its shade along with someone. Then his cousin came, yelling,

— Damn these Aws and Khazraj! They have gathered at the village of Quba around a man whom they call a prophet!

What must Selman have felt at that moment?

I began trembling so violently upon hearing his words that I was nearly about to fall on my owner.

— What did you say? What did you say? I repeatedly asked, as I quickly came down from the tree. Angered, however, my master hit me with a forceful slap and exclaimed,

— What is it to you? You worry about your own business!

— Nothing to worry. I only wanted to make sure I heard him correctly. I said

Come evening, I was able to get away to Quba, to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), taking with me a few things to eat I had been storing. My first words to him were,

— I hear you are a righteous man and that you have needy friends with you. I have some food I have been storing for charity. When I heard about your situation, I thought it you might be in need of it more than me.

I thus offered what I had to the Messenger of Allah. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said to his Companions:

— Here, help yourselves, and he did not even lay a finger on it.

“One down,” I thought to myself. I then departed from his presence and returned to Medina. I again saved up some more things. Meanwhile, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) had arrived in Medina. I went to him once more. I said

— I noticed you do not touch charity but this is a gift I have prepared for you. This time, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) ate from it and told his Companions to do likewise. “Two down,” I thought to myself.

Afterward, I visited the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), who was at the Baqi al-Gharqad Cemetery at the time; the occasion being a funeral of a Companion. He was seated amid his Companions, wearing two shrouds that were completely covering him. I greeted him, before moving behind him, in hope of perhaps seeing the Seal of Prophethood described by my master at Ammuriya. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) had sensed my intention; so he slightly slipped off his shroud from his back. I recognized the seal the instant I saw it! I fell over him; hugged him and began to cry. Right there and then, I became Muslim.

5- THE CLOTH PROTECTING FROM DISGRACE AND SIN

Before the religion of Islam was born, Arabs had been using headscarves. However, they didn't have a custom of covering the whole body. Women were not careful about covering their bodies, either. Eventually, 30th and 31st verses of Surah al-Nur were revealed.

"Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts; that is purer for them; surely Allah is Aware of what they do. And say to the believing women that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts and do not display their ornaments except what appears thereof, and let them wear their head-coverings over their bosoms..."

With these verses, women's prestige and dignity were elevated in the community. By properly covering themselves, Muslim women preserved their dignity and honor of the motherhood. They exhibited a sense of elegance and chastity through their loose clothes which were covering their entire bodies. They were no longer the means of salacity revoking bodily desires, but they turned into ladies who were the symbols of purity and modesty. The command of covering, of course, does not address to women only. It includes men, too.

Our Prophet (pbuh) was meticulous about women's covering. Once Asma, daughter of Abu Bakr, entered upon the Messenger of Allah (pbuh),

wearing thin clothes. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) turned his attention from her and he said:

— O Asma, when a woman reaches the age of menstruation, it does not suit her that she displays her parts of body except this and this, and he pointed to her face and hands. (Abu Dawud, Libas, 31/4104)

Abdullah Al Muharibi (r.a.) narrated: One morning, I saw our Prophet (pbuh) in the market.

He was calling out:

— O people! Say "la ilaha illallah" so that you reach salvation.

Some people were spitting on his face, and some of them were throwing dirt on his head, while some others were cursing upon him. This situation continued until noon. Just then, a girl whose neckline was uncovered came with a cup of water and a handkerchief. She was crying. Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) took the cup, drank the water and washed his face and hands. Then he raised his head and said:

— My dear girl! Cover your neck with your headscarf. Don't be afraid that your father will be trapped, murdered and abased.

When we asked who that girl was, we were told

— She was his daughter Zaynab. (Haythami, VI, 21)



6- BATTLE OF THE TRENCH (BATTLE OF HANDAQ) (627 CE)

a) Annihilating the Muslims

The Battle of Trench (Handaq) was a direful and difficult war which idolaters launched against Muslims. Idolaters were eager to annihilate the Muslims and destroy the Islamic State established in Medina by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Although they seemed to be victorious in Uhud, day by day Muslims were gaining strength in Medina and increasing in number.

Meanwhile some Arab tribes betrayed and double crossed Muslims. Taking advantage of this situation, idolaters began making preparations to attack Medina. Meccan idolaters succeeded to form a huge army of ten thousand men from Mecca and neighboring tribes. This time Muslims' job was really hard.

When the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) heard about the idolaters' preparations, he consulted with his companions on which war method to follow. He delivered an elegant speech that enhanced the hope and excitement of his companions. He (pbuh) promised them the forthcoming divine help provided that they didn't rebel against Allah's commands and endure the hardship in the way of Allah.

Allah inspired our Prophet (pbuh) to dig ditches around Medina. But still Allah's Messenger (pbuh) asked his companions whether they wanted to fight outside Medina or to dig ditches around the city to defend it. Salman al-Farisi said:

— O Messenger of Allah! In Persia, it was our custom to dig ditches around our cities when we were afraid of the raids of the enemy cavaliers. We should also do so. As a matter of fact, three sides of Medina were surrounded by the high exterior walls of houses, steep cliffs and dense date groves. Only the north side of

the city was open for enemy attack. If they dug a ditch to this side of the city which is too deep to be passed by the enemy, it would be easier to defend the city.

Salman's supportive words pleased the Muslims. This method which had been unknown to Arabs was deemed suitable for the defense of the city.

b) Ditches are being dug

The blowing wind was freezing the hands and feet of the workers in the ditch. Moreover, Medina was suffering from a famine. Muslims worked without eating anything for three days. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) tied a stone on his belly in order to lessen the pain of hunger just like the other Muslims did. He was digging up the earth along with his companions. He was delivering speeches to strengthen their endurance against hunger, cold and fatigue.

While they were digging the ditch, there came out a solid rock. Nobody was able to break and remove it. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) went down into the ditch, hit the rock thrice and broke it into pieces. After his first hit, he gave the good tidings of that big part of the land of Damascus was going to be captured by Muslims. After the second, he announced that the Persians were going to be conquered soon. And after the third one, he gave them the good news of opening of Yemen for Muslims. This beautiful news filled the hearts of Muslims under the hardship of cold and hunger with hope and joy.

Despite all kinds of nuisance and hardship, a large ditch of around 5500-meter-long was dug. The ditch was too wide for a horse to cross, and deep enough that one who fell in it could not get out. It was finished before the arrival of the enemy.

Recounting below is Jabir (r.o.):

"While digging trenches in the days preceding the Battle of Handaq, we were thwarted by a rather hard rock. A few Companions went to the Messenger of Allah and told him they had come upon a hard rock they were unable to break.

'I will go down in to the trenches myself' the Messenger of Allah told them. He then got up. He had a stone tied to his belly from hunger. It had been three days since we had eaten anything. The Messenger of Allah -upon him blessings and peace- grabbed hold of the pickaxe and struck a blow at the rock, which then shattered, turning into something like a sand dune.

'Allow me to go home, Messenger of Allah', I asked afterwards. Given permission, I went home and told my wife of seeing... the Messenger of Allah in an exhausted condition. Do we have something to eat?'

'Some barley and a kid', she said.

So I slaughtered the kid and sieved the barley. We placed the meat in a pot. Just as the bread was nearly baked and the pot was beginning to boil on the rocks on which it was placed, I rushed to the Messenger of Allah and said:

'I have some food, Messenger of Allah. Please, honor us with a couple of other persons...'

'How much food is there?' he asked. I told him what we had. He then said, 'Good and plenty...Tell your wife not to take the pot away from the fire and keep the bread in the furnace until I arrive!'

Then turning to his Companions he called out, raising his voice, 'People of the trenches; come...Jabir has prepared a feast for us!' Everyone present made a move.

Anxious, I ran home to my wife and said, 'Look what has happened now...The Messenger of Allah is coming with the entire Ansar, Muhajirun and others alike!'

'Did the Messenger of Allah ask how much food there was?' she asked.

'Yes' responded I.

'Then not to worry', she said calmly, 'for he knows more than you!'

They arrived a short while after. The Messenger of Allah -upon him blessings and peace- told them to enter without cramming each other. The Companions entered in tens. The Messenger of Allah -upon him blessings and peace- then began splitting a loaf of bread, putting some meat on it and giving it to each of the awaiting Companions; and each time he would close the lid of both the pot and the furnace once he was done. Until each and every Companion, around a thousand all up, ate to their hearts content, the Prophet -upon him blessings and peace- repeated the same procedure. There was even some food left over in the end. Then turning to my wife, he said, 'Eat this and offer some to your neighbors, too; for hunger has really devastated everyone!' (Bukhari, Maghazi, 29; Muslim, Ashribah, 141; Waqidi, II, 452)

c) Hard days

When idolaters came in front of Medino, they faced with a trench. Their astonishment reflected on their faces. However, they thought that with an army of ten thousand men, they would devastate Medina and wipe the Muslims away.

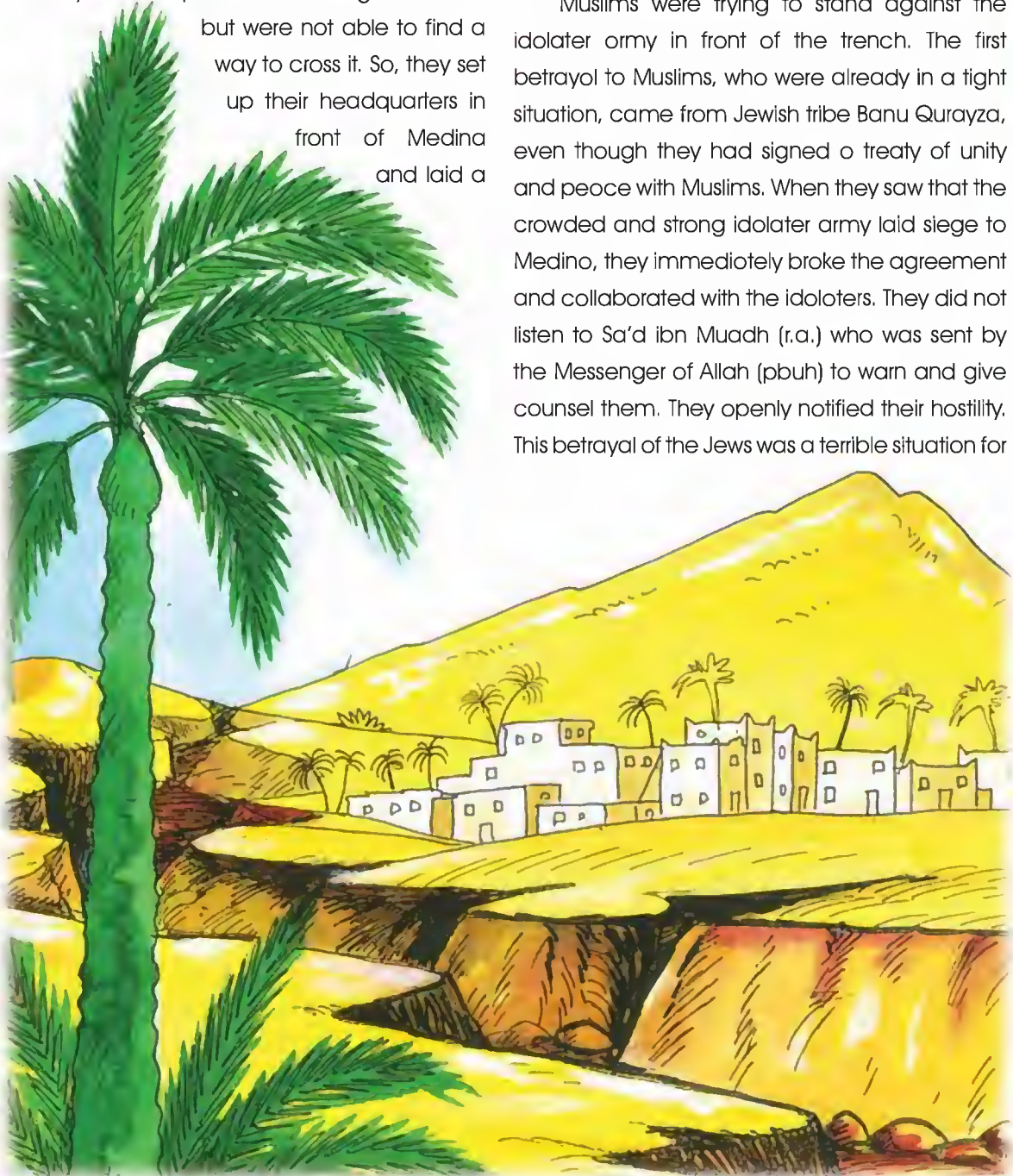
They moved up and down along the trench, but were not able to find a way to cross it. So, they set up their headquarters in front of Medina and laid a

siege to it.

Against ten-thousand-men idolater army, the number of the Muslims was approximately three thousand. The siege lasted for twenty-seven days.

The clash started with shooting arrows and stones.

Muslims were trying to stand against the idolater army in front of the trench. The first betrayal to Muslims, who were already in a tight situation, came from Jewish tribe Banu Qurayza, even though they had signed a treaty of unity and peace with Muslims. When they saw that the crowded and strong idolater army laid siege to Medino, they immediately broke the agreement and collaborated with the idolaters. They did not listen to Sa'd ibn Muadh (r.a.) who was sent by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) to warn and give counsel them. They openly notified their hostility. This betrayal of the Jews was a terrible situation for



the Muslims. For, males who can use a weapon were fighting in the front line. There were only females, children, elders and sick people left in the city. It was possible for the Jews to attack Medina and slaughter all women and children while Muslim men were fighting against the enemies in front of the trench.

Another betrayal came from the hypocrites. They started to plot mischief. They left fighting and started to talk about that Muslims were going to lose the battle.

On the other hand, idolaters were fed up with not being able to cross the trench and long duration of the siege. Besides, it was winter and the weather was cold. What the idolaters and their mercenary soldiers expected was an easy victory they could reach in a few hours of time.

Idolaters made a strong attack to defeat the Muslims. Arrows were pouring down upon the Muslims. The cavalry were striving to cross the trench. Those who were able to cross it were attacking at the Muslim soldiers' ranks. And those who fell into the trench were trying to get out and help them. The bravest and the most

powerful idolaters who were able to reach the other side of the trench were killed immediately by Ali (r.a.) and his men.

The following day was the hardest one of the battle. On the one side the idolaters and on the other side Jews from the Qurayza tribe made an assault. The arrow rain on Muslims continued uninterruptedly till night. Muslims were feeling suffocated. That day, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) and his companions could not even find time to perform their prayers. They performed them later.

d) End of the Siege

On those hard days, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) raised his hands and prayed saying: "O Allah! My dear Lord who revealed the Qur'an and the Bringer of Judgment! Disperse these Arab tribes, break their unity, and shake their will power."

When he finished praying, there was a delight on the Prophet's (pbuh) face. He heralded his companions about Allah's promise for help.



Do you think that this news refreshed the power and excitement of the Companions? What do you think what the effects of this good news were?



Meanwhile a Muslim spy sneaked into the Jews and Idolaters and caused a rift among them. In spite of being on the same side, Idolaters and Jews began to look at each other as if they were enemies. When the reliance among them was broken, their desire to fight against Muslims diminished.

That night a wind began to blow. The wind which later on turned into a storm became a hurricane and pulled up the tents and blew them away. The food boilers were overthrown, furnaces died down, the camel herds and horses were scattered. The idolaters' mouths, noses and eyes were filled with dust. Their headquarters became upside down. A terror filled their hearts. They were shocked. Their hearts sank in sorrow; they lost their hope and began to worry. Achieving no result from this long-term siege made them tired.

Idolaters started to withdraw in panic. They ran without being able to pack their

ammunition, food and other belongings. In the morning, Muslims collected the what their enemies left behind including lots of food and camels running around. This way, Muslims were saved both the siege and hardship of hunger.

In the Holy Qur'an this event is narrated as follows: **"And Allah turned back the unbelievers in their rage; they did not obtain any advantage, and Allah sufficed the believers in fighting; and Allah is Strong, Mighty."** (al-Ahzab 33: 25)

In this battle, four people from idolaters died. As for the Muslims, five people were martyred. After the battle, Allah's Messenger gave another good news. He said that:

— Now it's our turn ... Idolaters could no longer attack upon us but we will.

Right after the Battle of Trench, Qurayza Jews were called to account for what they had done. The Muslim army gave the appropriate punishment of the betrayal of this Jewish tribe.

7- HUDAYBIYYAH TRUCE (CE 628)

a) Muslims were longing for the Ka'bah

It had been six years since the Prophet (pbuh) and Muslims were expelled from their hometown Mecca and forced to migrate to Medina. During this time, they defended themselves against the attacks of the idolaters to kill and wipe them out, in Badr, in Uhud and in the Battle of Trench.

Nonetheless, the new Islamic faith, which valued the entire humanity without preferring anyone over others or looking down on anyone, was continuing to spread. However, Muslims' being at war with their own people in Mecca caused neighboring non-Muslim tribes to think ill about Islam. Because of this, our beloved Prophet (pbuh) wished to make peace with Meccan idolaters. This way, peace was going to be achieved in the society and other tribes were going to get to know and like Islam.

On the other hand, the Meccan immigrants missed the land in which they were born, grew up, but then were forced to abandon, leaving everything behind. For the last six years they could not visit the holy Ka'bah towards which they turn every time in their prayers.

In one of those days our Prophet (pbuh) had a dream. He gave to his Companions the good tidings that they were going to be able to visit the Ka'bah in that year. Preparations were

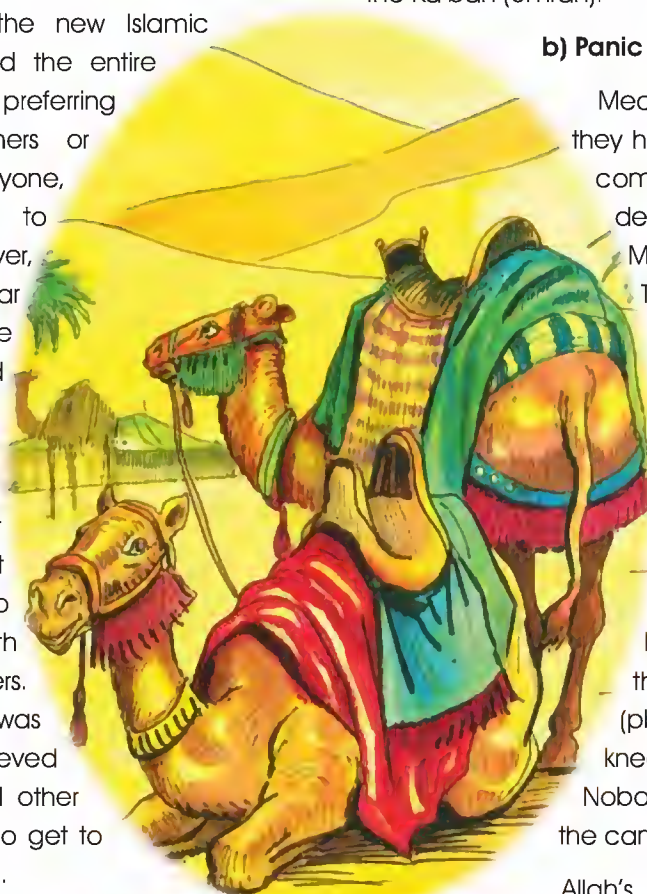
made. 1400 people left Medina for Mecca without taking any considerable weaponry such as armor or spear. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) didn't want to scare the Meccans or make them worry about that Muslims were coming for a war. Believers' intention was only to visit the Ka'bah and go back. They had 70 camels with them to sacrifice after finishing their minor pilgrimage to the Ka'bah (Umrah).

b) Panic of the Meccans

Meccans panicked when they heard that Muslims were coming to Ka'bah. They decided on not to let Muslims enter Mecca. They immediately sent a troop of two-hundred-horsemen. During that time, the Prophet (pbuh), along with the pilgrims, came as far as to a very close place to Mecca called Hudaibiyah. However, the camel of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) called Kaswa kneeled down there. Nobody was able to make the camel stand up.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that:

- The divine power which prevented the elephants of Abraha from entering Mecca now does not let Kaswa move. I swear to Allah I will accept whatever Meccans ask me to do to show my respect to the things Allah had blessed. No matter how hard their requests to be, I will consent. .





c) Peace Negotiations

After a while, a few people from Meccans came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). He told them that they had no intention to fight, but they were there only to visit the Ka'bah and worship. Allah's Messenger told them:

— If they want, we can sign a temporary truce. Your tribe of Quraish should not interfere with our relations with other tribes. If these Arab tribes were to accept Islam, they should be free to embrace it. Meccans should not prevent them. If they do not want to embrace Islam, it means that it happened what Meccans had

already wanted. But if they attempt to prevent this to happen, I swear to Allah, I will fight in the way of Allah until I die. Allah will send His help and make His religion superior.

After that the Prophet (pbuh) sent Uthman (r.a.) to Mecca. He negotiated there with Abu Sufian and other notables of the idolaters. He told them that their only object is to visit the Ka'bah. Meccans said:

— If we let all of you enter Mecca, Arabs will say "Meccans got scared from Muslims". You can circumambulate the Ka'bah. However, we will not let the others.

What might Uthman (r.a.) have done in this situation?



As to Uthman (r.a.), he refused this offer saying:

— Unless Allah's Messenger (pbuh) circumambulates the Ka'bah, I will not do so.

Uthman's behavior indicating affection and respect towards the Prophet (pbuh) made the Meccans angry. So, they did not let him go back and forced him to stay in Mecca.

d) Allegiance of Ridwan

Muslims got worried upon Uthman's delay. There was a rumor spreading that he had been murdered. If this were true, it would mean that idolaters declared a war against Muslims. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said:

— It looks like we will not leave without fighting.

Then, as a precaution, he called his companions to pay allegiance on "not to hesitate to give their life for the fight in the way of Allah." The companions who were already ready to die and give their whole property in

the way of Allah's Messenger shook his hand. They promised their loyalty saying:

— We promise to fulfill what Allah's Messenger (pbuh) wants us to do, to fight in the way of Allah until death, and never to escape from the enemy.

Upon this, Allah revealed the following verses:

"Certainly Allah was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance to you under the tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, so He sent down tranquility on them and rewarded them with a near victory. And many acquisitions which they will take; and Allah is Mighty, Wise." (al-Fath 48:18-19)

Witnessing Muslim's loyalty to Allah's Messenger and their firm faith, Meccans got worried of breaking out a war. They immediately set Uthman (r.a) free and sent an envoy to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) to talk about the conditions of an agreement

e) The Signed Truce Agreement

After long disputes between Meccan idolaters and Muslims, they struck a bargain. Hereunder:

1. Muslims will return without visiting Ka'bah that year. They will visit the Ka'bah the following year but they will not stay more than three days there and they will not bring any weaponry.

2. During Muslims' visit to Ka'bah, Meccans will move out of Mecca and will not see the Muslims.

3. There would be one-sided extradition - the Meccans taking refuge with the Prophet (pbuh) would be handed over on demand to the Quraysh. But Muslims taking refuge with the Quraysh would not be handed back.

4. Any tribe wishing to sign the agreement with the Makkans or the Quraysh, would be able to do so.

5. 1. There would be peace for ten years. During this period, Muslims could go to Mecca

and the Quraysh could go to Syria through the Muslim areas. There will be no attack or war between Meccan idolaters and Muslims.

f) The Sorrowful Incident

Just as they were done with the writing of the agreement, Abu Jandal (r.a.) showed up dragging the chains tied to his ankles. He had converted to Islam a while ago. His father tried to dissuade him from his religion, but when he failed, he enchained and put him into prison. Abu Jandal found out a way to escape from the prison and came to Allah's Messenger to take refuge. He joined to the community of believers.

His father Suhail demanded his son back. For, according to the terms of the agreement, individuals who become Muslim and escape from Mecca to take refuge with Muslims in Medina were required to be sent back.

Despite the request of the Messenger of Allah, his father didn't give up his request to take Abu Jandal back. As to Abu Jandal, he was talking about the tortures he had endured and was begging the believers not to send him back.



If you were there, what would you say to Abu Jandal?

Hopelessly, Abu Jandal was delivered to idolaters not to break the peace agreement. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) looked at him with sad eyes and consoled him saying:

— O Abu Jandal, be a little bit more patient. Allah will soon open the way to salvation for you and those who bear hardship because of their faith!

Upon this sorrowful incident, companions became pretty upset and tears flowed down

from their eyes. But there was no choice, for the deal was already signed.

Until then, Meccans had considered Muslims as a community that they could disperse and destroy. With the Truce of Hudaibiyah, they were legitimizing the Muslims as a state. This truce was an important step for spreading Islam outside Medina, because it enabled Muslims to increase their interaction with the neighboring non-Muslim tribes. Islam began to spread freely without having any intervention. The Muslim population also started to incrementally increase.

THE KEY TO THE HEAVEN

That night Robia waited unblinkingly in front of the door of Allah's Messenger (pbuh) until the sunrise. Robia loved the Prophet (pbuh) more than himself and was entranced while he was serving him. Because he knew that Allah's Messenger was going to wake up to performing *tahajjud* (before dawn) prayer, he prepared his ablution water, towel, miswak and prayer rug in the evening. Eventually, the Prophet (pbuh) was seen on the door. He smiled at Robia when he saw him and greeted.

Everything was going in the way Robia wanted. There, a quiet and spiritual night! The Master of the universe was performing ablution before him, and Robia was pouring water for him. This was a moment worth for a whole life. In these beautiful thoughts, he poured water. When the ablution was finished, he gave him the towel. A while later he caught the Prophet's (pbuh) eye. He was embarrassed and looked down. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) asked:

— Robia! What do you wish from me in return for your service? This was the greatest chance of his lifetime.

— I desire to be with you in the Heaven. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) asked again:

— Don't you want any worldly goods?

— I desire to be with you in the Heaven.

This was really a great wish. Robia wanted the highest position in the Heaven which is called *Maqam Mahmood* (Praised Position) and be next to Allah's most beloved Prophet there. Our Prophet asked:

— You asked a great thing from me. Can't you wish something other than this? But Robia said:

— My Master! I only want to be with you in the Heaven.

— Robia! Then help me by praying and prostrating much.

From that day on, Robia regularly performed his prayers. He prayed a lot. Robia found the key to the Heaven, which he wished. He was holding the key so firm that he did not leave it even when he died.

8- SENDING DELEGATES AND LETTERS OF INVITATION TO ISLAM (CE 628-629)

Islam was the last religion sent to humankind. It was the only authentic religion which remained unchanged. Therefore, Islam was needed to be announced not only within Arabia but all around the world. In accordance with the terms of the Hudaibiyyah Truce, Meccan idolaters were not going to hinder Islam's spreading. So, it was time for Islam to deliver the message of Islam in far regions rapidly.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) consulted this matter with his companions after they returned to Medina from Hudaibiyyah. They decided on sending delegates and letters to sovereigns of neighboring states and certain

Arab principalities. In order to use as a seal, a silver ring on which it was written "Muhammad ar-Rasul Allah" (Muhammad the Messenger of Allah) was made. The letters sent to sovereigns were going to be sealed with that ring.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) wrote and sent letters to the kings and leaders of neighboring states one by one. The brave companions delivered these letters passing over deserts, mountains and seas. While doing this, they were never afraid of shining swords of executioners or sunless prisons of the kings. It was the greatest honor for them to deliver the letters of the Messenger of Allah which invited their addressees to Islam.

Here are some of them...



a) Inviting Byzantine Emperor Heraclius to Islam

It was Halifa's son Dihya al-Kalbi who delivered the Prophet's (pbuh) letter of invitation to Islam to Heroclius. At that time Heroclius was in Jerusalem. The emperor who welcomed Dihya ordered the Arab merchants in that area to be brought to him in order to get more information about our Prophet (pbuh). A trade caravan from Mecca was in that region at that time. Abu Sufyan, the leader of the Meccan idolaters, was in the caravan too. Heroclius asked him several questions and listened to his answers. Meanwhile, Heroclius was accompanied with clergies and priests from his people.

— How is Muhammad's (pbuh) lineage?

— He is from a noble lineage.

— Are those who embrace his religion from nobles and wealthy ones or from the weak ones of the public?

— Mostly, they are poor and weak people.

— Does the number of his believers increase or decrease as days pass?

— They are increasing.

— Are there people who entered his religion and afterwards left because they didn't like it?

— No, there is nobody.

— Did he ever tell a lie before?

— It never happened.

— Did he ever break a promise?

— No, he didn't.

— What does he ask you to do?

— He says: "Worship only Allah. Don't associate any partners to Him." He wants us to leave the idols that our ancestors worshipped. He commands us to perform prayers, to be righteous and modest.

Heraclius, who got the answers he wanted, spoke heatedly:

If what you have just told me is true, then the land we live on right now will soon be conquered by him. I knew that a Messenger was going to come, but I didn't expect him to come from the Arabs. If I knew that I would be able to reach him, I would endure all kinds of hardship. I would wash his feet and serve him if I were beside him.

Later on, he had the letter read in a way everybody could hear.

"Bismillah al-rahman al-rahim... From Allah's servant and Messenger Muhammad to Heraclius the leader of Rome. May peace be upon followers of the straight path of salvation! Henceforward: I invite you to embrace Islam and serve to spread it. Embrace Islam so that you obtain salvation. So, Allah doubles your reward. If you don't accept it, the responsibility of not making your people embrace the right religion belongs to you..."

This speech of the king and the letter made priests very angry. When the letter was read, an uproar and sough started in the hall. Heraclius was afraid of the things to get out of control. He wanted Dihya and Arab merchants to be taken out. He changed his mind saying to people around him that he wanted to check their level of loyalty to their religion. Thus, the fear of losing



his sovereignty prevented him from embracing Islam. However, he treated Dihya very kindly and respectfully. He gave him presents and politely declined the proposal of embracing the new religion.

b) Inviting Persian

King Husraw Parwiz to Islam

The Prophet's letter inviting Persian King Husraw Parwiz to Islam was delivered by Huzaifa's son Abdullah. In the letter it was written thus:

"Bismillah al-rahman al-rahim... From Allah's slave and Messenger Muhammad to the leader of Persian land King Husraw! May peace be upon those who adapt the wisdom, believe in Allah and His Messenger, and who testify that He is One and there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his servant and Messenger. O King! I am inviting you to the right religion of Allah, because I have been sent as a warner of Allah's torment to the livings and a guide to all mankind. O King! Be a Muslim in order to reach salvation. If you don't accept my invitation, may the sins of the Zoroastrians among your people be on you."

When the Sasanian ruler read the letter, he tore it up in anger. When Allah's Messenger (pbuh) got the news of this, he said:

— May they and their state be in pieces like that letter.

Not long after this, the King Husraw Parwiz was murdered being his stomach pierced by his son Shirwahy. In the following years, the entire Persian lands were conquered by the Muslims.

c) To the Najashi Ashama, King of Abyssinia

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) sent Negus Ashama who was originally Christian a letter

through Amr, son of Umayyah. Ashama had treated well to Muslims who migrated to Abyssinia and to Ja'far, the son of the Prophet's (pbuh) uncle before. He protected them from being harmed by anyone and made it possible for them to live in accordance with their faith. In the letter it was written:

Bismillah al-rahman al-rahim. From Allah's Messenger to Najashi, the King of Abyssinia. O King, Embrace Islam. I am happy about the benediction Allah gave to you and I am praising Him in your stead. I bear witness that Jesus, son of Mary, is Allah's Prophet. Allah brought him into the world without having a father, from pure, innocent Mary who had never married. However, Christians deified him. O King! I am inviting you to submit to Allah, who is unique having no match and to obey me and the book I brought. For, I am Messenger of Allah. I am calling you and your people to Allah's religion. Adopt my advice. May peace be upon followers of the Right Path!

King of Abyssinia Ashama wrote a letter in return to Allah's Messenger. He informed that he became a Muslim.

Bismillah al-rahman al-rahim, to Allah's Messenger... From Najashi Ashama. O Allah's Prophet, may Allah's peace, mercy and profusion be upon you. O Allah's Messenger, your letter reached me. I swear to Allah, the Lord of heavens and earth, what you told about the Prophet Jesus is true. What he said is the same as you told. I bear witness that you are Allah's faithful Messenger who confirm the previous prophets. I swear allegiance to you. I believed in Allah, the Lord of the universes and I became Muslim.

How happy do you think the Prophet (pbuh) became upon a state's leader's being honored with Islam?

9- THE CONQUEST OF KHAIBAR (CE 628)

a) Jews of Khaibar Want To Fight

Khaibar was a Jewish town 170 kilometers away from Medina. It consisted of seven castles. And there were also beautiful date groves and fertile lands.

The Jews, who had been previously expelled from Medina, settled there. They were pushing the idolater Arab tribes to treat Muslims as enemies. One of the reasons of the Battle of Trench was incitements of those Jews.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) wanted to reach a peace treaty with people of Khaibar. On the way back from Hdaybiyyah, he sent a message to Khaibar stating that he wants to have a peace agreement. However, the Jews of Khaibar refused to sign it. On the contrary, they were preparing to assault on Medina with the support of neighbor tribe, Gatafan. Because of the fact that Muslims had accepted Meccans' heavy conditions in Hdaybiyyah Agreement, they were thinking that Muslims were weak and desperate. However, this was not the case. Hypocrites were also encouraging people of Khaibar to fight. Gatafan tribe accepted to collaborate with Jews on attacking Muslims.

In that case, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) decided to take action before letting the enemy make their preparations and to cross the path of Gatafan tribe. They set out with 2000 horse-men and 1600 pedestrians towards Khaibar.

b) The Castles of Khaibar Are Being Conquered

After performing the dawn prayer, the Prophet (pbuh) advanced towards Khaibar. In

the morning, the Jews, who had left their homes with their diggers and oars to go to their works, were shocked to see the Muslim army in front of them. They screamed: "Muhammad, by god, Muhammad and his soldiers..." and run back to their castles. Among the seven castles in Khaibar, the steadiest and the most prepared one against a war was the castle called Kamus. There were plenty of food and weapons in it. Jews had really been prepared for the fight. As a result, they didn't accept the Prophet's (pbuh) proposal for peace.

At the end of the twenty-day-long siege, all of the castles were captured one by one except for the castle of Kamus. Muslims had no result from their attacks made under the leadership of Muslim commanders. Kamus castle could not be captured.

Finally, one day, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) spoke:

— Tomorrow I will give the flag to someone with whose hands Allah will grant the conquest of Khaibar. He is a person who loves Allah and His Messenger. And Allah and His Messenger love him as well.

Not knowing to whom this honor was going to be given, everybody stayed up till morning with the hope of being the lucky person. In the morning, the Prophet (pbuh) said:

— Where is Ali? Call him for me!

Ali was suffering from a severe eye pain. Therefore, nobody thought that the flag would be given to him. The companions:

If you were in Ali's shoes, what would you think?

— O Allah's Messenger, Ali has pain in his eyes. They brought Ali by holding from his arms. Our Prophet (pbuh) prayed and blew to his eyes. His eyes were immediately recovered. It was as if he had not had the pain at all. Then the Prophet (pbuh) gave the flag to Ali.

Ali, at first, invited the Jews to Islam however, they didn't accept it. They didn't agree on peace, either and continued to fight. Furthermore, reading heroic verses, they challenged against Muslims. Later on, the strongest invincible fighter of the Jews, Marhab came out of the castle and said:

— Is there a brave man to have the courage to confront me?

Ali himself confronted him. Bravely fighting, Ali knocked this strong Jew out. When Marhab was killed, the Jews were demoralized and they lost their resistance. They couldn't resist any more. Being despaired, they surrendered the castle. Thus, Khaibar was entirely taken



under the rule of Muslims. And Ali became the conqueror of Khaibar. During the fight, 93 Jews were killed. On the other hand, Muslims gave 15 martyrs.

c) The Plot to Assassinate the Messenger of Allah for Revenge

The Prophet (pbuh) stayed a few days in Khoibor. Despite the humanistic treatment they had been shown, the Jews planned to assassinate Allah's Messenger (pbuh).

The daughter of one of the Jewish leaders named Zaynab prepared a feast. She then invited the Messenger of Allah along with some of his friends. She put a piece of poisoned meat on the table. As soon as the Prophet (pbuh) put the first bit in his mouth, he immediately took it

out of his mouth and said: "This meat tells me that it was poisoned, my friends, don't eat it." But Bishr, son of Bara had already eaten a few bits, so he got poisoned and died right there.

When Allah's Messenger asked the Jews why they had done that, they said:

— We thought, if you were a liar, we could get rid of you, but if you were a real Prophet, this poison wouldn't harm you.

They supposedly gave a clever answer. The woman who poisoned the meat however didn't refuse what she had done. She said:

— My father, uncle, husband and my brothers, all of them died in the war. I did it to take my revenge.

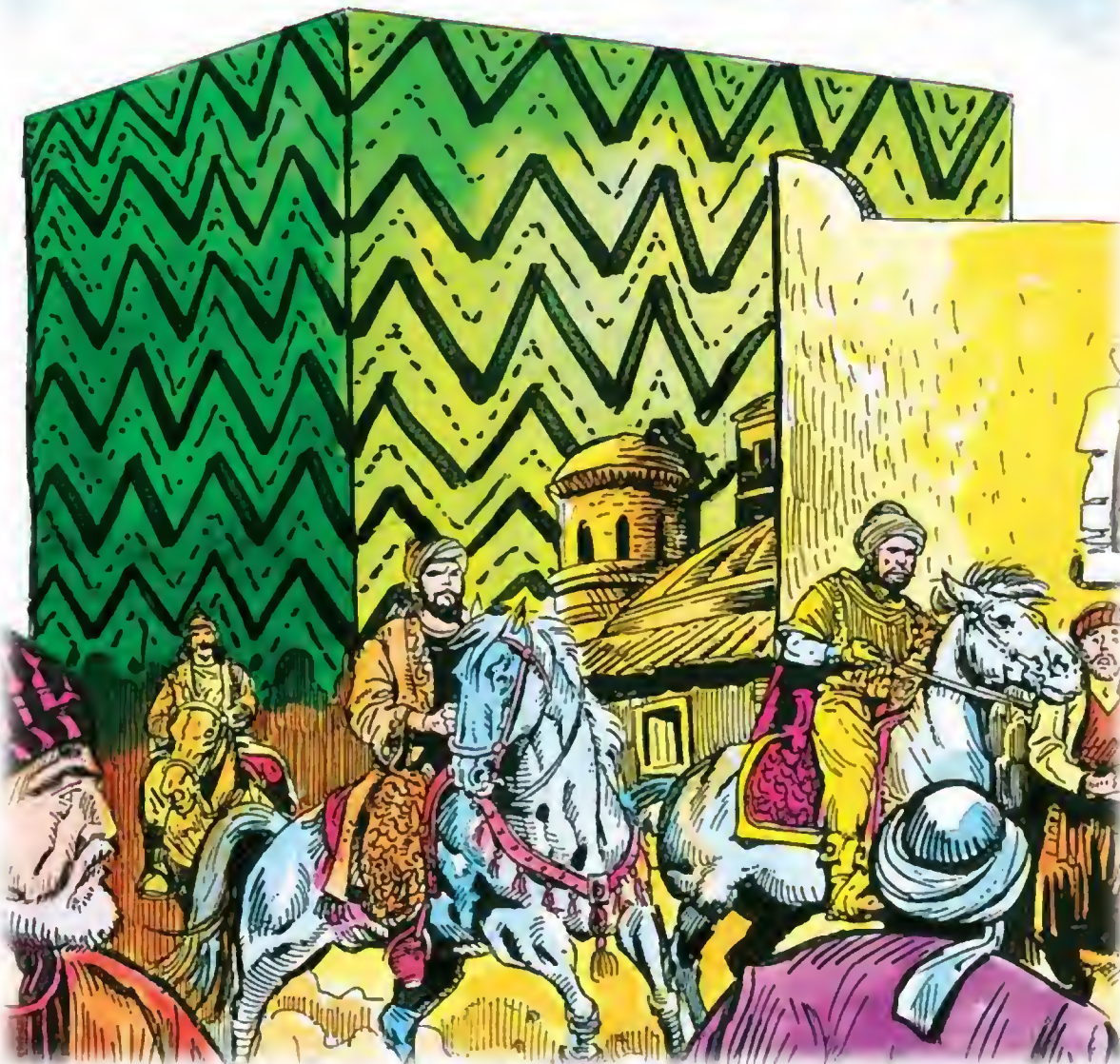


10- YEARS LATER THE VISIT TO KA'BAH (CE 629)

As it is stated in Hudaibiyah Truce, a year later Allah's Messenger (pbuh) along with more than 2000 companions came to Mecca from Medina.

Idolaters had left Mecca, when they heard that Muslims had been coming, as they agreed upon the year before. They watched Muslims from the tents they set up on the high hills surrounding the city.

What do you think how the Muslims who visited the Ka'bah after a long period of waiting felt? What do you think they did?



Muslims' entrance to Mecca was really exciting. The Prophet (pbuh) was moving forward on his camel Kaswa. The statements of "Allahu Akbar... Labbayk Allahumma Labbayk ..." coming out of the hearts of the Muslims were resonating in skies of Mecca. The Ka'bah for which they yearned for years was now in front of them.

They performed their Umrah a year later with delay, which they had not been able to perform the year before.

Muslims stayed in Ka'bah for three days. Meanwhile, the idolaters curiously and admiringly followed their worship and behavior from a distance. They were speaking among themselves about Muslims saying:

— *How kind and gentle those Muslims are!*

— *They are praying together, peacefully and respectfully to each other!*

— *They don't get drunk and curse each other as we do!*

— *Yes, they are really modest and pure minded people with good manners!*

— *When they pray or chat with each other, they love and treat with justice to each other. They are not rude at all like we are!*

— *Look, they are also in obedience and worship to Allah all the time. They are in peace and tranquility!*

— *As a matter of fact, how nice people are they!*

Meccan idolaters were deeply affected by Muslims' good manners and elaborateness in their worship. When they were closely acquainted with Muslims with whom they were enemies before, Meccans began to admire them. There were even people among them who had begun to think to convert to Islam.



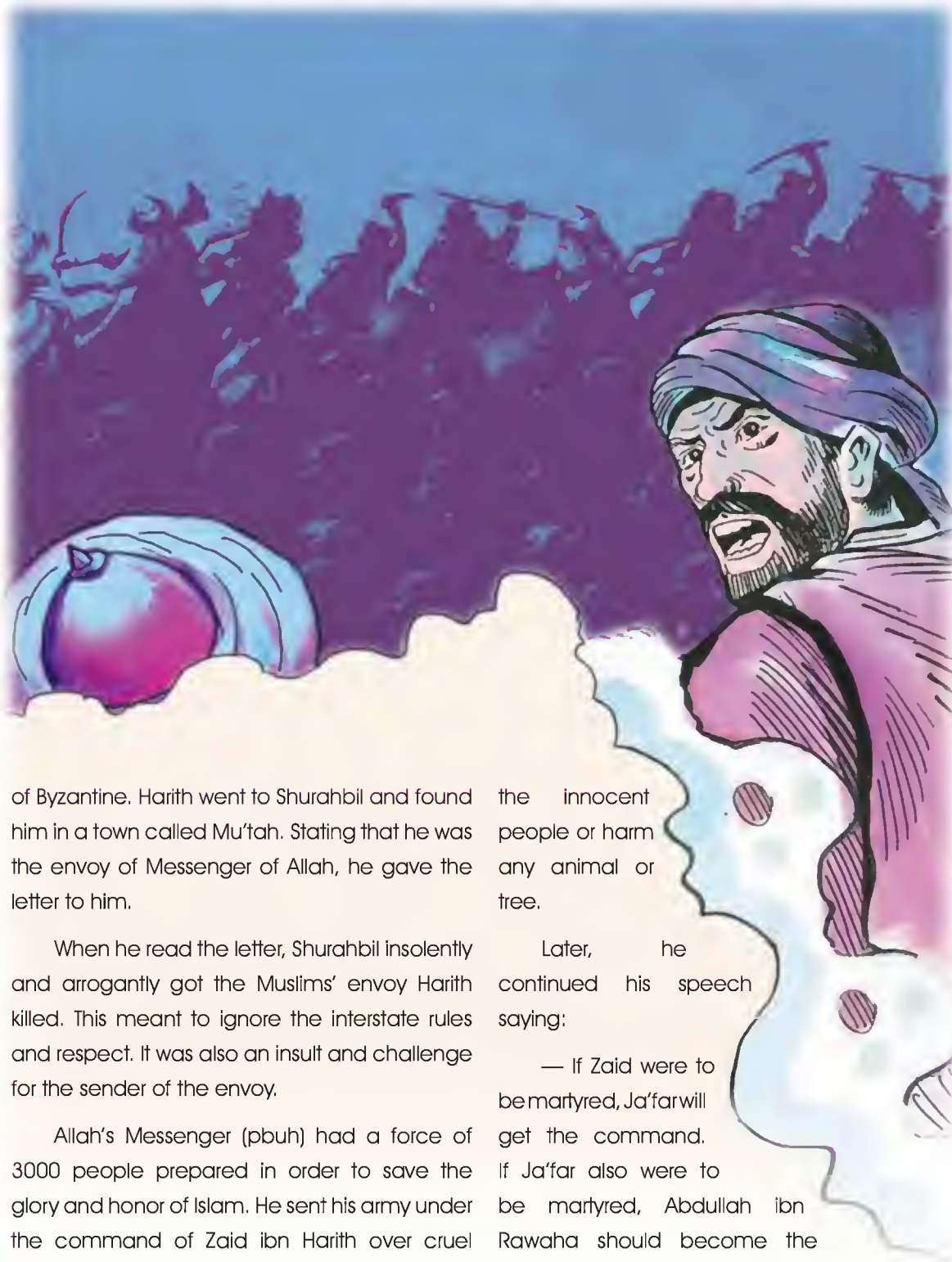
11- BATTLE OF MUTAH (CE 629)

a) When the Prophet's Envoy who was calling to Islam was Murdered

While he was sending delegates to rulers of neighboring countries in order to invite them to

Islam, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) sent a letter to Shurahbil, the governor of Busra in Syria, too. It was Harith ibn Umayr who delivered the letter to Shurahbil who was a Christian under the charge





of Byzantine. Harith went to Shurahbil and found him in a town called Mu'tah. Stating that he was the envoy of Messenger of Allah, he gave the letter to him.

When he read the letter, Shurahbil insolently and arrogantly got the Muslims' envoy Harith killed. This meant to ignore the interstate rules and respect. It was also an insult and challenge for the sender of the envoy.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) had a force of 3000 people prepared in order to save the glory and honor of Islam. He sent his army under the command of Zaid ibn Harith over cruel Shurahbil. He told the commanders:

— Invite him to Islam. If he doesn't accept it, then fight with him! Don't hurt children, women and elders! Don't demolish houses of

the innocent people or harm any animal or tree.

Later, he continued his speech saying:

— If Zaid were to be martyred, Ja'far will get the command. If Ja'far also were to be martyred, Abdullah ibn Rawaha should become the commander. If he too were to be martyred, then Muslims should elect one among them as their commander!

b) The Power of the Enemy and the Unique Courage of Muslims

Only after they entered the Syrian lands, Muslims realized that there was an army consisting of at least 100,000 men waiting for them. The enemies were also well equipped in terms of arms and weaponry. On the other hand, the number of Muslims was only 3,000.

Zaid the commander of the army gathered some of his warriors and consulted the situation with them.

What were 3,000 warriors with limited weaponry supposed to do against a fully equipped force of 100,000 men? Should they inform Allah's Messenger about the case and act according to his answer? But weren't they here to fight? They couldn't return without fighting. Abdullah ibn Rawaha cleared all of the hesitations.

— My brothers! What we flee from is our main goal, which is to become martyrs. Let's fight to exalt our religion. We will either be martyrs or war veterans ... Aren't they both beautiful?

Abdullah's speech strengthened the brave believers' faith and exhilarated their emotions of jihad. They said all together:

— Son of Rawaha is right! Let's fight!

c) The Turn to be honored with martyrdom

Two armies came across in a place called Muthah. Zaid heroically rushed forward with the flag in his hand. He fought bravely showing that he was not afraid of death. However, he

gave his life for the sake of Islam under spears of enemies.

After Zaid was martyred, Ja'far immediately took the flag. He too fought heroically. When his right hand was cut off, he took the flag in his left hand. When his left hand was also cut off, he grasped it with his arms. Even though he got wounded severely, he didn't leave the flag till his last breath. In the end, he was martyred, too. After Ja'far, Abdullah ibn Rawaha got the flag. Reciting poems, he fought heroically as well. He fought until his body got riddled with sword and arrow wounds.

By the time, Abdullah ibn Rawaha got martyred, soldiers remained without a commander. After this incident, Muslims lost their hope against the enemy army which consisted of 40 times more men than them. But, Khalid ibn Walid who was a war expert gathered the soldiers that were about to disperse. Even though he was a recent convert, Muslims gathered around him again. Khalid got the command of the army and fought till evening with the flag in his hand. That day, he had nine swords shattered in his hands. From that day on, Khalid was named as "Sayfullah", the sword of Allah.

In the night, Khalid reorganized the soldiers. He put the ones in the back to the front rows, and the ones in the front to the back rows; he changed the places of the ones in the right side with the ones in the left and the ones in the left side with the ones in the right.

How do you think the arrangements done by Khalid affected the course of the war?

On the following day, the enemy thought that new soldiers came to the help of Muslims when they saw different soldiers in front of them. With a sudden and powerful attack order given by Khalid early in the morning, the enemy was

forced to run. Making use of this opportunity, Khalid smartly drew his soldiers back. They returned Medina without having a considerable loss. During this severe battle against 200000 people, Muslims had only given 12 martyrs.



JA'FAR'S ORPHANS

Ja'far's wife, Umayy bint Asma narrated:

Those were the days close to the return of the army from the Battle of Mu'tah. With the whole family, we were looking forward to Ja'far's return. Allah's Messenger came to us. That day, after I had kneaded the dough for bread, cleaned the faces of my children and combed their hair. The Prophet (pbuh) asked me:

— O Asma! Where are Ja'far's children?

When children came, he caressed and kissed them one by one. At the same time, his tears were running down his cheek. I asked him:

— O Messenger of Allah! Why are you crying? Why do you treat my children as if they were orphans? Is there painful news from Ja'far and his friends?

Allah's Messenger (pbuh):

— Yes! They were martyred today!

I began to cry saying: "O my master! O my Ja'far!"

Then the Prophet went to Fatima and said:

— Cook some meal for Ja'far's family. They are sorrowful today.

We were brought food for three days. At the end of the third day, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) came to us and said:

— Don't cry for my brother any more. From now on, I am responsible for looking after my brother's children.



QUESTIONS

HOW MUCH DID I LEARN?

1. What did our Prophet (pbuh) want before the Battle of Uhud? What was the result after he consulted with his companions?
.....
.....
2. Why did the archers on Aina Hill leave their places?
.....
.....
3. How do you think the result would have been if the archers in the Battle of Uhud had not left their places?
.....
.....
4. How was the love of the Prophet (pbuh) to his uncle Hamza displayed during the funeral prayer for martyrs of Uhud?
.....
.....
5. When he was offered to be replaced with the Prophet (pbuh) in order to save himself from execution, what answer did Zaid give?
.....
.....
6. What were the other things prohibited along with alcohol and stated as the works of devil in the verse?
.....
.....
7. What were the three signs that Salman Farisi had learnt in order to recognize the true Prophet for whom he was in search for a long while?
.....
.....
8. In which year did the Battle of Ditch take place according to both solar and lunar calendars?
.....
.....

9. While Muslims were about to be defeated during the Battle of Trench, how did the result turn into a triumph?

.....

.....

10. What were the main terms and conditions of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah?

.....

.....

11. Why was Abu Jondal who embraced Islam and came to the Prophet (pbuh) right after the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah sent back?

.....

.....

12. What did the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) ask from the Kings of neighboring countries in his letters of invitation to Islam?

.....

.....

13. What excuse did the Jews give upon their attempt to poison the Prophet (pbuh)?

.....

.....

14. What did idolaters think about Muslims who visited the Ka'bah one year after the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah?

.....

.....

15. Who were the three companions who commanded the army in turn during the battle of Muthah? After these companions, who took over the command?

.....

.....

WHICH ONE IS THE CORRECT ANSWER?

- 1) **When did the Battle of Uhud take place according to solar calendar?**
A) 623 B) 624
C) 625 D) 626
- 2) **In determining the form of war, to which matter did Allah's Messenger pay the greatest attention?**
A) Courage B) Honesty
C) Counsel D) Valor
- 3) **Whom did Allah's Messenger leave as an agent in Medina while he was on a military expedition?**
A) Ali
B) Uthman
C) Abdullah ibn Umri Maktum
D) Zaid ibn Thabit
- 4) **About what did the Prophet (pbuh) warn emphatically the archers he placed on the Ainayn Hill?**
A) To protect the flag
B) Not to leave their places unless an instruction comes to do so
C) To protect Hamza
D) To go down to the battle field in order to save the Prophet (pbuh) if they see that the Muslim army in trouble
- 5) **For what reason did the archers on the hill of Ainayn leave their places?**
A) Because they couldn't bear up against the Prophet's tooth being broken
B) In order to help their friends
C) To collect the booty thinking that they gained a victory
D) Because the war strategy was decided in this way
- 6) **Which of these isn't one of the disasters happened to Allah's Messenger (pbuh)?**
A) His blessed lip was cracked
B) His blessed tooth was broken
C) His blessed nail was broken
D) Two rings broken off from his sheathing stung his blessed cheek
- 7) **Which battle was the one the Prophet (pbuh) was eager to be martyred along with other martyrs?**
A) The Battle of Muthah
B) The Battle of Uhud
C) The Battle of Ditch
D) The Battle of Badr

- 8) How did Abu Sufyan, who was the leader of the idolaters in those times, comment upon Hubayb's brilliant answer that he gave in response to the proposal made to him while he was on gallows?
- A) Their Prophet must have these people enthralled
 - B) These Muslims must have lost their minds
 - C) I have never seen someone loved that much by his friends
 - D) I think you should think of your own soul first, use your brain
- 9) Which of the following was not forbidden with the verse related to intoxicants?
- A) Gambling
 - B) Divining Arrows
 - C) Obelisks (idols)
 - D) Fornication
- 10) Which of the following people related to alcohol are cursed by the Prophet (pbuh)?
- I. The drinker
 - II. The one who helps others to drink
 - III. The one who carries it
 - IV. The one who sees it
 - V. The one who buys and sells it
- A) I, II and III
 - B) I, II, III and V
 - C) I, IV, V
 - D) I, II, III, IV, V
- 11) Where was the Prophet's (pbuh) seal of prophecy on his body?
- A) Between his eye brows
 - B) In his blessed palm
 - C) On his blessed cheek
 - D) On his blessed back, between his two scapulae
- 12) Which chapter of the Qur'an mostly talks about the incidents happened during the Battle of Trench?
- A) Surah al-Baqara
 - B) Surah al-Ahzab
 - C) Surah Yasin
 - D) Surah al-Rahman
- 13) Who were the two groups that betrayed Muslims during the Battle of Trench?
- A) Jews and Christians
 - B) Christians and idolaters
 - C) Hypocrites and Christians
 - D) Hypocrites and Jews
- 14) Who is a Munafiq?
- A) The person who became Muslim by force
 - B) The person who denies being Muslim with his/her tongue
 - C) The person who collaborates with unbelievers against Muslims
 - D) The person who says that s/he is Muslim even though s/he doesn't really believe in Islam
- 15) For how many years was the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah agreed upon to be valid?
- A) 16
 - B) 14
 - C) 10
 - D) Indefinitely

16) Which of the following verses is more related to the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah?

- A) "And if you would count Allah's favors, you will not be able to number them."
- B) "His command, when He intends anything, is only to say to it: Be, so it is"
- C) "But it is possible that you dislike a thing which is good for you"
- D) "But those will prosper who purify themselves, and glorify the name of their Guardian-Lord, and (lift their hearts) in prayer."

17) Which of the following are the positive results of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah?

- I. Idolaters legitimized Muslims as a state.
- II. The spread of Islam sped up.
- III. The relation and negotiation of Muslims with neighboring tribes and states increased.
- IV. Muslims were able to visit the Ka'bah that year.

- A) I, IV B) I, II, IV
- C) I, III D) I, II, III

18) Which state's leader answered in the affirmative to the letters of Allah's Messenger inviting to the true religion Allah?

- A) Heraclius King of Byzantine
- B) Husraw Parwiz King of Iran
- C) Ashama King of Abyssinia
- D) Shurahbil Governor of Busra

19) On the day of Khaibar's conquest, to which companion did Allah's Messenger give the flag?

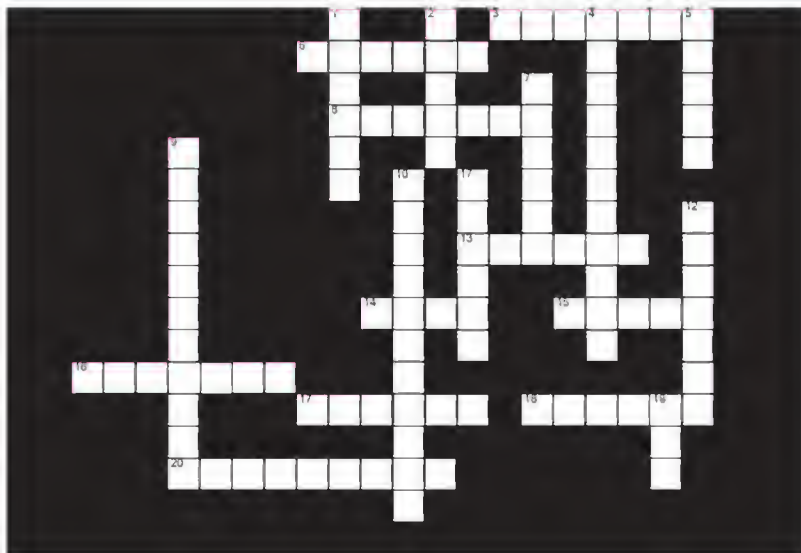
- A) Zaid B) Umar
- C) Ali D) Sa'd

20) What was the number of Muslims against an army of 100000 people during the Battle of Mu'tah?

- A) Five thousand B) Fifty thousand
- C) Ten thousand D) Three thousand



Crossword Puzzle



1. The incident that the Prophet (pbuh) cursed for the betrayers after performing the dawn prayer for forty days: The Disaster of The Well of Maunah
2. The respected companion of the Prophet who took the flag after Zaid and later on became martyr in the Battle of Muthah
3. The person who worships idols beside Allah; Idolater
4. The name of the treaty signed between Muslims and Meccan idolaters.
5. The name of the Prophet's camel.
6. One of the Companions of the Prophet. Salman was originolly from Persia and was born in a Zoroastrian family. After a long pursuit of the straight path he found the Prophet of the true religion.
7. The name of the allegiance given to Allah's Messenger (pbuh) upon Uthman's delay and spread of a rumor that he was murdered.
8. The title given to Abyssinion rulers.
9. The thing described as the head of all kinds of evil, which is forbidden to consume.
— The one who worships fire; fire-worshipper.
11. The person who gove his/her life in the way of Allah; Martyr
12. A person who pretends to be a Muslim, however, s/he doesn't actually believe in the religion and the Prophet; hypocrite
13. The name of the hill where the archers were placed in the Battle of Uhud
14. The name of the hill where the archers were placed in the Battle of Uhud
15. Our Prophet's beloved uncle who were martyred during the Battle of Uhud.
16. A Jewish tribe who betrayed Muslims. Sons of Qurayza
17. Christian religious scholar.
18. The name of the battle in which idolaters gathered people from neighboring tribes and attacked Muslims with 10000 people; Battle of Trench
19. One of the bravest companions whom Allah's Messenger appointed as the flag bearer on the day of Khaibar's conquest.
20. The nickname given to Khalid ibn Walid because of the ochievements he mode during the Battle of Muthah.

**“Bismillah al-rahman al-rahim...
From Allah’s slave and Messenger
Muhammad to the leader of Persian land
King Husraw! May peace be upon those
who adapt the wisdom, believe in Allah
and His Messenger, and who testify that He
is One and there is no god but Allah and
Muhammad is his servant and Messenger. O
King! I am inviting you to the right religion of
Allah, because I have been sent as a warner
of Allah’s torment to the livings and a guide
to all mankind. O King! Be a Muslim in order
to reach salvation. If you don’t accept my
invitation, may the sins of the Zoroastrians
among your people be on you.”**





THE MANNERS THAT MAKE ONE A GOOD MUSLIM



ADAB



- ❁ *Manners In Brotherhood*
- ❁ *Showing Respect To The Elders*
- ❁ *The Manners Of Entering And Leaving The House*
- ❁ *The Manners Of Giving - Receiving Gifts*



MANNERS IN BROTHERHOOD

Only Believers are brothers!

Before Islam, people, who were divided into tribes, were in a constant state of warfare. The smallest excuses were enough to begin a war to promote tribal honor. Bonds of kinship would come before the bonds of religion and belief. In accordance with the Divine command, "The believers are nothing else but brothers. Therefore make peace between your brethren and observe your duty to Allah that you may obtain mercy" (al-Hujurat, 49: 10) the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- declared a brotherhood amongst the believers. Thereafter, the feelings of religious brotherhood eclipsed that of kinship; such that during the Battle of Badr, the first battle in which the Muslims were forced to enter, many a Believer fought against his uncle, his brother or even his father. Indeed, in the heat of the battle, Abu Bakr –Allah be well-pleased with him- came face to face with his son; and Abu Ubaydo ibn Jorroh –Allah be well-pleased with him- against his father; and Hamza –Allah be well-pleased with him- against his own brother.

So deeply did the Medinan Ansar embrace the notion of brotherhood following the Hijra that

they made the Meccan Muhajirun equal owners of their homes. They showed a never before seen instance of selflessness and generosity.

OUR BROTHER DESERVES THE BEST OF OUR SERVICE AND CARE

The Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- offered the following advice to a group of Companions, just before they set out to visit another group of brethren:

"You are coming to your brethren; so tidy your mounts and tidy your dress, until you are like a mole among the people. Allah does not like obscene words or deeds, or do intentional committing of obscenity." (see, Abu Dawud, Libas, 70)

**ARRIVING NEXT TO THE LOVED
ONES SHOULD BE LIKE A FESTIVAL.
REMEMBER THAT A MUSLIM IS ONE
WHO GIVES HAPPINESS AND JOY TO HIS
SURROUNDINGS.**



Brothers are responsible towards one another! Brothers have rights over each other!

- ❁ A brother runs to his brother's help, sees to his need; for whosoever takes care of a brother's need in this life will have Allah, glory unto Him, take care of his need in the Hereafter. (Bukhari, Mazalim, 3)
- ❁ A brother does not expose the faults of his fellow brother. Whosoever conceals the deficiencies of a brother in this life will have Allah, glory unto Him, conceal his faults in the Hereafter. (Muslim, Birr, 58)
- ❁ Muslims seek to patch up relations, not destroy them. They do not backbite and spread gossip.

Hasan Basri –may Allah have mercy on him- once had a man come to him and say,

"I went to so-and-so's house the other day and he said malicious things about you."

"Why did you go to his house to begin with?" asked Hasan Basri.

"I was invited there for a meal", he replied.

"Well, what did he serve you?"

"Many things...Soup, roast meat, sweets, milk..."

In response, Hasan Basri said:

"You were able to keep all those things you say you ate in your stomach and you couldn't keep a couple of words in you?"

SHOULDN'T WE ALSO SEE THE GOOD SIDES OF OUR FELLOW BROTHER?

- ❁ Believers visit each other only for the sake of Allah, glory unto Him, in good times and bad.
- ❁ Muslim brothers always nurture well-wishes for each other.
- ❁ They express their love for another.
- ❁ If a believer must tell another of his mistake, he talks to his brother with the best of intentions and in private. He acts like a mirror that reflects to him what he is.
- ❁ A brother also loves and respects his brother's loved ones.
- ❁ Brothers never hate or envy one another. They do not continue not speaking to each other for more than three days.
- ❁ Brothers do not look down on each other.
- ❁ A brother prays for his fellow brothers who have become entrapped in the swamp of sin. He tries to save them and give them a helping hand out of their situation.
- ❁ In showing mutual mercy and compassion towards one another, Muslims are like the organs of a single body. When one of the organs hurt, it distresses the rest of the body. For instance, during a toothache, we instantly raise our hand to our cheek for comfort. Our feet carry the whole body to the dentist, just to have the aching tooth treated. The eyes share its pain by losing sleep and staying awake. The entire body mobilizes itself to heal the pain of a single tooth. And likewise, no matter how geographically distant they may be from each other, all Muslims are like the organs of a single body.

Such is Brotherhood!

A young doctor, only having recently graduated from medical school, went to a clinic to begin his first duty in a relatively small town in rural Konya. In his first night, he was lodged as guest at someone's house. The house was right next to the train station. After dinner, he had tea and engaged in a warm, friendly chat with the homeowner. But the young doctor was tired from the long journey as well as he was still trying to overcome his feeling of overall foreignness to the place. Hours eventually passed and as he was doing his best to keep himself from the grip of a deep sleep. But he was too shy to tell the homeowner just how sleepy he was. Meanwhile, the hours passed by without any visible preparation for sleep.

The young doctor timidly asked the elder of the house:

- ❁ "What time do you sleep around here?"
- ❁ "We are waiting for the last train", responds the man. "It should be arriving soon."
- ❁ "Are you waiting for someone you know?" asked the young man. The answer left him stunned.
- ❁ "No, son...there isn't anyone that we know of who will be arriving on the train. It is just we live in a remote town and there could be a foreigner who may possibly get off the train. And if he does not see a house with its lights still on, he could end up sleeping on the street. We are waiting in case that someone in that situation may arrive so that we can have him over as guest."



A LEGENDARY FEAT

The Battle of Yarmuk was a fierce battle that tested the patience of all Companions. There were only 46,000 of them, facing a daunting Byzantine army of 240,000 men. Their hearts filled with the love of Allah and His Messenger, they fought gallantly. Under the command of Khalid ibn Walid, praised by the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace– himself, they gained a blitzing victory. They had given 3000 martyrs and slain around a 100,000 Byzantines. The victory was indeed a legendary feat of bravery and sacrifice almost unequalled in history.

The battle was drawing to an end. The entire battlefield, scorched all day by the blistering sun, was covered by hurling dust. Having now fought for hours on end, the brave Muslims were carrying spear, arrow and sword wounds. They had not found even a moment's opportunity to drink the sun-warmed water out of their water bottles. Lips craving for a drop of water were, one by one, sipping the potion of mortality that would cool them down for eternity, mumbling the word of tawhid with their parched tongues. Huzayfa –Allah be well-pleased with him– recounts these scenes of sacrifice made by men giving up their loves for the sake of Allah, glory unto Him, and the eternal happiness of humankind:

"I was wounded and exhausted. With what remained of my strength, I got up on my feet and went looking for my cousin Harith. I was moving amid my brothers, lying across the field, living their final moments in life, moaning from the pain of their mortal wounds. Before long, I found him. He was carrying multiple wounds. I kneeled towards him, with my water bottle in hand.

He had no energy left to speak. But he was trying to tell me something with his eyes. When

I hurriedly opened the lid of the bottle and held it out to him, to unite his cracked lips with the water he had been longing for, I heard the voice of brother Iqrimah, lying wounded on the ground close to where we were.

"Water! Water! Please...a drop of water" he was moaning. It turns out that on hearing the voice of Iqrimah, my cousin was signalling me, with his eyes, to take the water bottle to him instead.

I immediately ran towards Iqrimah, who had let go of his body, pierced by from multiple sword and spear wounds, on the scorching sand. I held out my bottle to his mouth. He seized it and lunged forward to take his first drink. That was when we heard the moans of our brother Ilyas, from not so far away.

A drop of water, please...For the love of Allah!" he was groaning.

Before the warm water could even touch his lips, Iqrimah handed the bottle back to me; and slowly turned his head towards the direction of Ilyas, signalling me to take the bottle to him. He could not bear to have even a drop of water his brother Ilyas was agonizingly moaning for.

When I ran to Ilyas, I found him drawing his last breath, saying the word of tawhid. His Lord had taken Ilyas to His eternal mercy, allowing him to gulp the springs of Paradise before he could ever lay his parched lips on the water Iqrimah had foregone for him. Instantly, I ran back to Iqrimah, thinking that I should at least deliver the water to him. But by the time I arrived next to him, he too had long drunk the beverages of Paradise offered to martyrs. Harith was still alive, at least; so I ran this time to him. But like the others, Harith stood in no need of water anymore.

SHOWING RESPECT TO THE ELDERS

Man is an honored and dignified being.

With their knowledge and experience, elders possess a greater know-how compared to children and the young. They merit greater honor and respect than anyone. Therefore, in the Islamic culture, the young always respect their

elders, give them priority, and consider serving them a duty. The elders, too, treat the young with love, compassion, and understanding. In this way, a bond of love and respect emerges between the young and the old. This creates a peaceful environment in Muslim society.



How do we show respect to our elders?

- ✓ In a seated environment, on seeing an elder walk inside, we stand up and if needed, show him a place where he can sit; and wait for him to do so.
- ✓ If the elder is someone of old age or vast knowledge, we show him respect by kissing his hand.
- ✓ We know that the priority of speech always belongs to our elders. We either talk when they have finished talking or we ask permission to talk.

Ibn Omar –Allah be well-pleased with him- recounts:

I was still a small child when the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace- asked a group of elders around him to name a tree that resembles the features of a Muslim; the tree which always bears fruits and is evergreen.”

Nobody there spoke to name the tree that the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace- was thinking of. I thought in my mind that ‘this must be the date tree’; but because I was next to the Companions like Abu Bakr and Omar –Allah be well-pleased with them-, I thought it would be inappropriate to state my opinion. Moments later, the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace- confirmed what had been crossing my mind. ‘It is a date tree’, he said.

Then when I left the gathering along with my father, I told my father that the name of the tree had occurred to me when the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace- asked the question.

‘Then why did you not say it?’ my father asked. ‘It would have made me so happy to see you give the right answer!’

‘Seeing all of you keep silent’, I answered, ‘I thought it would be more appropriate for me to keep my silence, too (when in fact I could have spoken when none of them could think of the answer)’. (See, Bukhari, Ilm, 4 Adab, 79)

- ✿ We do not raise our voice when speaking to our elders. We keep our wits about us and do not act in a shameless manner.
- ✿ We do not act rudely by making gestures with our hands and arms.
- ✿ When eating with elders, we wait for them to start first.
- ✿ When walking with them on the street, we do not walk in front of them. Rather, slightly behind them and to their left.
- ✿ If we see them carrying a heavy bag in their hands, we carry it for them.
- ✿ We run to their help wherever they may be and for whatever help they may need.
- ✿ On vehicles of public transportation, we vacate our seats for them, should they be unable to find an empty seat.
- ✿ When they leave from a gathering, we stand up and see them to the door.

One day the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- was sitting with his Companions. Right next to him were Abu Bakr and Omar –Allah be well-pleased with them-. Then suddenly, Abbas –Allah be well-pleased with him-, the Prophet’s –upon him blessings and peace- uncle, turned up. Abu Bakr made up room for Abbas; and Abbas sat right between the Prophet and Abu Bakr. The Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- then said:

“Only the courteous and refined know the value of courteous and elegant people.”

While talking with his uncle, the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- had lawered his voice sa much that Abu Bakr said to Omar:

"Samething has happened ta the Messenger af Allah...it seems that he has lost his voice; and that has me worried". Abbas eventually left maments later, whereupon Abu Bakr asked the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace-:

"Were you not feeling well before, O Messenger af Allah?"

"Na", replied the Praphet –upon him blessings and peace-.

"It made me worried ta hear you lawered your voice sa much..." Then the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- explained:

"Just as Angel Gabriel has advised you to lower your voices next ta me, he has advised me to lower my voice next to my uncle." (Ali al-Muttaqi, Kanzu'l-Ummal, V. XIII, 514/37321)

This is Respect!

The Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- would listen ta everyone aut until they finish talking. He would never interrupt anyone's talk. Ta those who extended their hands ta him ta shake, he would offer his hand and would not draw it back until the other person drew his hand back. Thraughaut the durati-an af their chat, the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- would listen by looking directly at their faces and would not turn his gaze elsewhere until the person had dane sa. (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 46)

Soon afterwards, they found him lying dead in



The Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- was always happy ta see youngsters respectfully helping their elders. he would say **"Allah the Almighty blesses a young person who shows respect to an elder because of his age, with people to serve him in his old age"**.

(Tirmidhi, Birr, 75)

One day the Companions Abdullah and Muhayyisa went to the town of Khaybar. They were going ta meet a friend there. When their friend failed ta shaw up at the agreed spat, they became worried and went out in search of him.

o ditch, covered in blood. Terribly upset, they returned to Medino. When Abdurrohmon, Abdullah's brother, was informed of what had happened, he took Muhoyyiso as well as his brother Huwoyyiso to the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace-. There, the young Abdurrohmon excitedly began explaining the incident, at the top of his voice, letting no one else speak; when in fact Muhayyisa, who was not only personally part of the incident and but also older than him, was right by his side.

Not pleased with Abdurrohmon's attitude, the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- cautioned him with the following words, "Leave the speech to your elders...leave the speech to your elders." (Bukhari, Jizya, 12) Thereupon, Abdurrohmon went quiet and left the explaining to his elders.

The Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- was fond of talking with a medium tone

and piecemeal, word by word. He never talked in a high pitch, as addressing a deaf person or in an argument. He used to set the best example in polite and courteous speech, both to his own grandchildren and other children. He would advise them to speak in a soft tone, when talking to both their seniors and juniors. As an example, he would quote the advice that Luqman –upon him peace- gave to his son: "And be moderate in your pace, and lower your voice; for the horshet of sounds without doubt is the braying of the oss." (Luqman, 31; 19)

The Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- desired all people to show mutual respect. Just as he wished for juniors to respect their elders, he also wished for elders to value and love their juniors. He would say, "He who does not love and value his juniors and does not honor and respect his elders is not from us." (Tirmidhi, Birr, 15)

IF ONLY THEY TOOK A LESSON

Murod II, the great Ottoman sultan, recalls one of his experiences:

We had crushed the Crusaders on the battlefield of Varna. In the aftermath, I wondered around the field, observantly inspecting the slain soldiers of the crusading army. One thing I noticed was that they were mostly young.

Turning to Azap Bey, the experienced commander of countless battles

☀ I remarked, 'Almost not a single old man amid this massive pile of bodies, Azap...Not a

single man with grey in his hair...What do you say?

Azap Bey understood the subtle point I was trying to make and smiled. After a moment's silence, he said,

☀ They would not have dared to face a strong and courageous army and steer themselves into disaster, if they had enough old men to speak sense into them...

☀ Perhaps all their elders already took the lesson that your late grandfather Bayazid had given them on the battlefield...

More than enough fear to hold them back! (referring to the victory at Nigbolu forty-eight years ago)



THE MANNERS OF ENTERING AND LEAVING THE HOUSE

The Home of Happiness

Homes are places in which everyone lives in peace and comfort. Better or worse, places in which we feel the most comfortable are our homes. People are free at home; they eat, drink, walk around, rest and sleep however they please. At times, they also have their private moments which they do not want anyone else to see. There are therefore some rules that we must pay attention to when entering or leaving a house, be it our own, our friend's or someone else's

Allah the Exalted says:

"But if you do not find any one therein, then do not enter them until permission is given to you; and if it is said to you: Go back, then go back; this is purer for you; and Allah is Cognizant of what you do."

(an-Nur, 24; 28)

Allah the Exalted says:

O you who believe! Do not enter houses other than your own houses until you have asked permission and saluted their inmates; this is better for you, that you may be mindful.

(an-Nur, 24; 27)

Our beloved Prophet said:

"Asking permission is thrice: If given permission you enter; if not, you turn back."

(Bukhari, Istidhan, 13)

What to pay attention to when entering or leaving a house:

- When entering a house, we need to knock on the door and ask permission, even if the house be our own.
- When about to enter someone else's house, we do not knock on the door more than three times.
- While waiting for permission to enter at the front of the door, we turn slightly to the side, so that once the door opens, we do not immediately see who/what is inside.
- On being asked 'Who is it?', we respond by clearly stating our names and, if need be, our surnames.
- If the door is already open, we still say 'as-salomu alaykum' or ask permission to enter before stepping inside.
- Whether it be our own home or somebody else's, we should enter a house cheerfully and have nice things to say.
- When leaving, we bid farewell to those who we leave behind, extending our best wishes and wishing upon them the protection of Allah, glory unto Him.



YOU MUST ASK PERMISSION

At the age of eight, his mother left Anas ibn Malik –Allah be well-pleased with him- next to the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- so that her son could serve the Prophet –upon him blessings and peace. The little Anas served the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace- up until the age of twenty. Receiving the special training of the Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- until he was twenty, Anas went on to live another seventy years after the passing away of the Prophet –upon him blessings and peace-. He loved the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- so much that he never kept him out of his mind. Anas –Allah be well-pleased with him- would say:

“There has never been a night in which I have not seen the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace- in my dream. Inshallah, when I reunite with him in the Hereafter, I will say, ‘Look, O Messenger of Allah...your little servant Anas has come’ and ask for his intercession.”

Anas –Allah be well-pleased with him- passes on one of the fine wisdoms he learnt

from the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace-:

“The Messenger of Allah said to me, ‘Give your greetings to your family, my dear, when you enter home so that that your salam serves as blessings both for yourself and your family.’

(Tirmidhi, Istidhan, 10)

Another man once came to the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace- and asked, ‘Am I supposed to ask permission even from my mother when I am entering home?’

‘Yes’, replied the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace-.

‘But I live with her’, said the man.

‘You must still ask her permission’, said the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace-.

‘But I am always in her service’, added the man.

‘You must still ask...Would you like to see her naked?’ asked the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace-.

‘No!’

What not to do when entering or leaving a house:

- ✓ One must never peep through the keyhole, the window or any other place before entering the house.
- ✓ When at somebody else's house, we do not meddle with or go through anything without the permission of the homeowner.
- ✓ We do not look inquisitively at the merchandise or furniture inside the home –as if looking to buy them-.
- ✓ We do not try to catch sight of people in other rooms from where we are sitting.
- ✓ We do not lend an ear to the conversations taking place in other rooms.
- ✓ After knocking on the door and asking permission to enter, we do not barge through the front door before actually the permission is given.
- ✓ In the case of an emergency which requires us to leave immediately, we inform the homeowner, even if it be with a note.

'In that case ask permission before you enter.' (Muwatta, Istidhan, 1)

Sahl ibn Saad –Allah be well-pleased with him- explains:

"A man was trying to peer inside the Prophet's –upon him blessings and peace- through a hole on the door. At that moment, the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace- had a comb in his hand. Becoming aware of the unwelcome behaviour of the man, he said,

Our beloved Prophet said:

"If I knew you were spying on me with malicious intent, I would have pierced your eyes with this comb. Asking permission before entering a house has been commanded only to ensure that the interior of the home is protected from sight."

(Muslim, Adab, 40, 41)



THE MANNERS OF GIVING-RECEIVING GIFTS

Offering gifts strengthens the bonds of love.

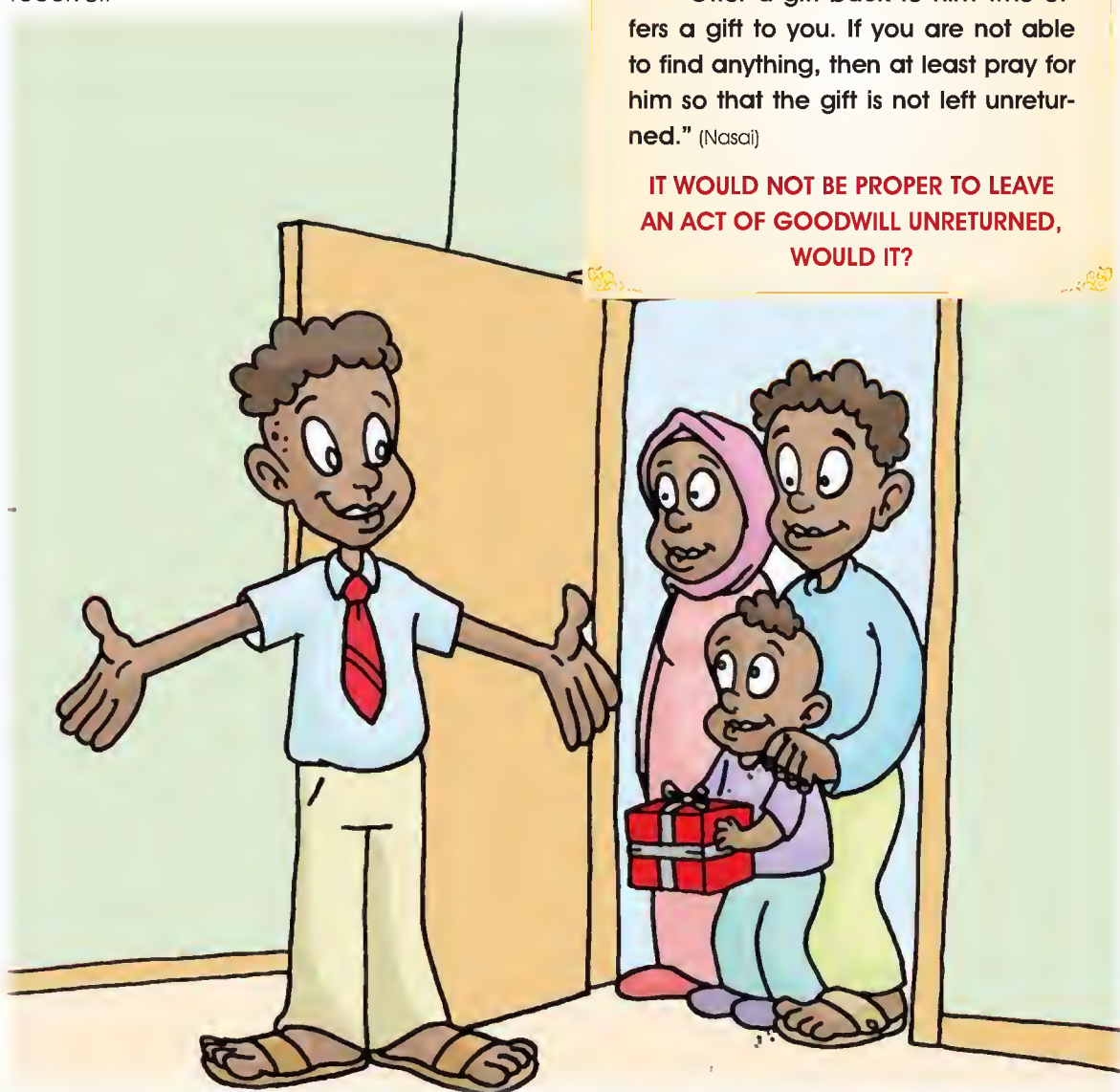
Gifts are what we offer to our loved ones without expecting anything in return. Presenting gifts help destroy selfishness, miserliness and ill-feelings of jealousy. Receiving gifts, in turn, amplify feelings of mercy and compassion, like a pinch of sugar dropped in the glass of water. It erases any prior hatred and hardheartedness between the giver and the receiver.

The Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace– informs how offering gifts helps bring believers together and strengthens their bonds of love:

“Offer gifts to one another; for a gift wipes out malice and hatred from the heart. Let not any woman belittle any gift she offers her female neighbor, even if it be a little piece of mutton.” (Tirmidhi, Wala, 6)

“Offer a gift back to him who offers a gift to you. If you are not able to find anything, then at least pray for him so that the gift is not left unreturned.” (Nasai)

**IT WOULD NOT BE PROPER TO LEAVE
AN ACT OF GOODWILL UNRETURNED,
WOULD IT?**



What to look out for when offering gifts?

- ✓ Gifts should be offered and received with the intention of fulfilling a *sunnah* of the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace, and a deed of worship.
- ✓ One should not take note of the material value, quality or the size of a gift. What is important in offering or receiving gifts is the value two people mutually place upon one another and their mutual love.
- ✓ When offering a gift, if the desire to show off or an expectation of a favor in return finds its way into the heart, the gift will lose all its

It also a *sunnah* of the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- to present personal items to people who happen to like it.

“A woman once brought a mantle she had knitted with her own hands to the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace- as gift. She said:

‘I knitted this with my own hands so that you could wear it, Messenger of Allah.’

Needing a mantle of the kind, the Messenger of Allah kindly accepted the gift, wore it and then came next to us. Someone who saw him remarked, ‘What a beautiful mantle...Can I have it?’

‘Sure’, replied the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace-. After sitting awhile, he then returned home; and after nicely folding the mantle, sent it to the man as gift.”

(Bukhari, Libas, 18)

WHAT DO YOU SAY? SHOULD WE OFFER A PEN OR A BOOK WE ARE READING, AS GIFT, TO A FRIEND WHO HAPPENS TO LIKE IT?

value. The gift will not produce feelings of love, compassion and brotherhood.

- ✓ The gift must not be out of one’s budget; for remembering and being remembered is what is important, not the material value of the gift.
- ✓ If possible, we should buy or prepare the gift with our own means.
- ✓ Those who deserve our gifts the most are our family members, our relatives, friends and neighbors but most of all, our dearest mothers, who have done far more for us than anyone.
- ✓ We should wrap our gift in the best way possible and offer it with a smile and polite, gentle words.



What kind of gifts are unacceptable?

- ✓ Things considered unlawful or vile by Islam cannot be offered or accepted as gift.
- ✓ Things that will scare or upset a person cannot be given as gift.
- ✓ If the gift is offered as bribe or as reason to cause injustice, which are prohibited by Islam, then the gift cannot be accepted.



A SINGLE SHIRT

The Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- would love giving away the things he owned as gift. If a person wanted something from him, he felt obliged to give it. There were times when he would give away the very last food or the sole item of clothing he had.

In fact, one day a child came to him and said, “My mother wants a shirt from you.”

The Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- had only the shirt he was wearing at the time and nothing else to wear.

“I will give you a shirt...but come a little while later”, he said to the child.

The child went back and returned not long afterwards.

“My mum urgently needs any shirt you can give her”, he said. Thereupon the Blessed Prophet

–upon him blessings and peace- went inside his room. He removed the shirt he was wearing and handed it to the child. The Companions, who arrived at the Masjid a short time later, found out that the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- had given away the only shirt he had and therefore was unable to come to Masjid for prayer. They immediately obtained a shirt and gave it to the Messenger of Allah –upon him blessings and peace-.

With his unique and unmatched generosity, the Blessed Prophet –upon him blessings and peace- was a superb example to entire humankind.

ANSWERS

OUR GUIDE IN LIFE: FAITH IN THE BOOKS OF ALLAH

Crossword Puzzle (Pg. 33)



Find the Correct Match (Pg. 34)

1	Allah the Exalted revealed His messages to His prophets	5	has come down to us in its original unchanged form.
2	Since Adam (peace be upon him), prophets brought us	6	the commands and prohibitions of our Exalted Lord.
3	We obey the orders in these books and,	8	the beauties and truths of all of the preceding Divine books.
4	Depending on the people's needs, Our Lord Almighty sent	7	people begin to deviate to wrong beliefs.
5	We believe in that the Noble Qur'an	1	either directly or by means of an angel.
6	Divine books tell us	3	try to goin the pleasure of Alloh the Almighty.
7	When the original forms of the Divine books get corrupted,	2	the words ond messoges of Allah.
8	The Noble Qur'an consists of	4	to some of His prophets small books called <i>suhuf</i>

Let's Test Ourselves (Pg. 34)

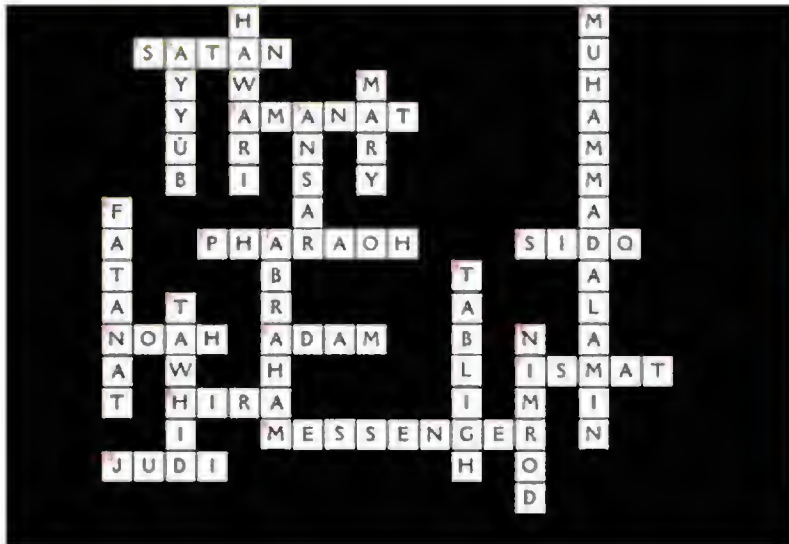
1- c 2- c 3- o 4- a 5- d 6- b

Let's Fill in the Blanks (Pg. 35)

- The Gospel, light
- The Reminder, guordion.
- The Book, the Torah
- In portions, the people
- The Book of Alloh, right guidance
- Its contents, a crown

EXEMPLARY PEOPLE: FAITH IN THE PROPHETS

Crossword Puzzle (Pg. 63)



Find the Correct Match (Pg. 64)

1	Denying the prophets	4	the unity of Allah and to worship Him alone.
2	Prophets were responsible to deliver the religion of Allah to humanity	7	the earlier prophets with love and respect.
3	Even if they faced all kinds of sufferings and hardships,	6	is a sign of Allah's mercy to His servants.
4	All prophets invited their people to believe in	8	about forgiving those who harm us and responding evil with kindness.
5	Our Lord Almighty has sent His prophets	2	and to live in accordance with its principles.
6	Forgiving Adam after eating the forbidden fruit	5	to be our role models.
7	Our beloved prophet would remember	3	prophets never held back from fulfilling their mission.
8	Prophet Joseph is a nice example for us	1	means denying the religion.

Let's Test Ourselves (Pg. 64)

1- c 2- a 3- b 4- b 5- a

Let's Fill in the Blanks (Pg. 65)

1. leaders / our command
2. good news / a plea
3. am excellent example / follow
4. a lesson / understanding
5. prayer / I do

THE SEASON OF MERCY AND WORSHIP: RAMADAN AND FASTING

Let's Check Our Knowledge (Pg. 93)

1- RIGHT 2- WRONG 3- RIGHT 4- WRONG 5- WRONG 6- WRONG 7- WRONG 8- RIGHT

Let's Test Our Knowledge (Pg. 93)

1- o 2- b 3- c 4- o 5- b 6- c 7- d 8- b 9- o

Fill in the blanks (Pg. 94)

1- mercy, forgiveness of sins 2- Health 3- Sixty-one 4- Qada
5- Nadhr 6- Power, forgive 7- Rayyan

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR: ZAKAT

Let's Check Our Knowledge (Pg.123)

- ☐ those who own wealth as much as nisab ☐ are considered rich according to the religion.
- ☐ We give one-fortieth of gold or silver ☐ in other words, 2.5% of it as Zokot.
- ☐ A person can't give zakat ☐ to his grandsons.
- ☐ While giving zakat ☐ we should not forget that we are performing an act of worship.
- ☐ To institutions such as mosques, schools, hospitals ☐ and to build roads, fountains, and bridges, zakat cannot be given.
- ☐ Zokot serves a bridge that ☐ carries the means of rich to the poor.
- ☐ A rich Muslim's donation of some of his wealth, ☐ to recipients that our religion ordered is called "zakat."
- ☐ Giving hand, ☐ is superior to the receiving hand.
- ☐ The amount of nisab for gold ☐ is 80.18 grams.
- ☐ The minimum amount of sadaqah al fitr is ☐ two meals of a middle-income person or the corresponding monetary amount.

Let's Test Our Knowledge (Pg. 123)

1- d 2- a 3- c 4- a 5- b 6- d 7- c 8- d

Fill in the blanks (Pg. 124)

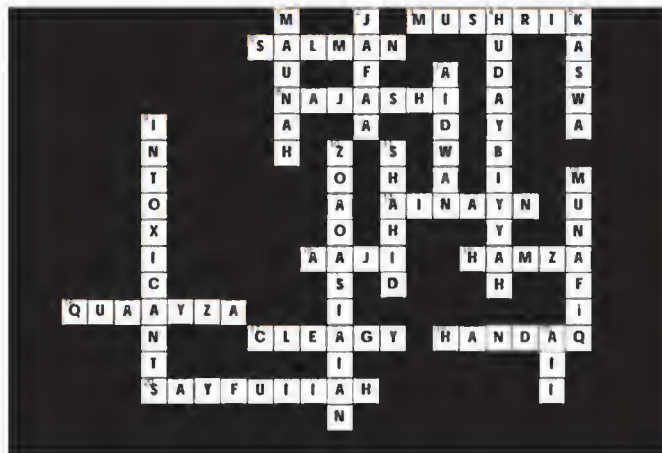
1- does not beg 2- in the wealth 3- Seed 4- Your heart 5- purifies

I AM LEARNING MY PROPHET: SIRAH

Let's Test Ourselves (Pg. 166)

- 1- c 2- c 3- c 4- b 5- c
 6- c 7- b 8- c 9- d 10- b
 11- d 12- b 13- d 14- d 15- c
 16- c 17- d 18- c 19- c 20- d

Crossword Puzzle (Pg. 169)





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